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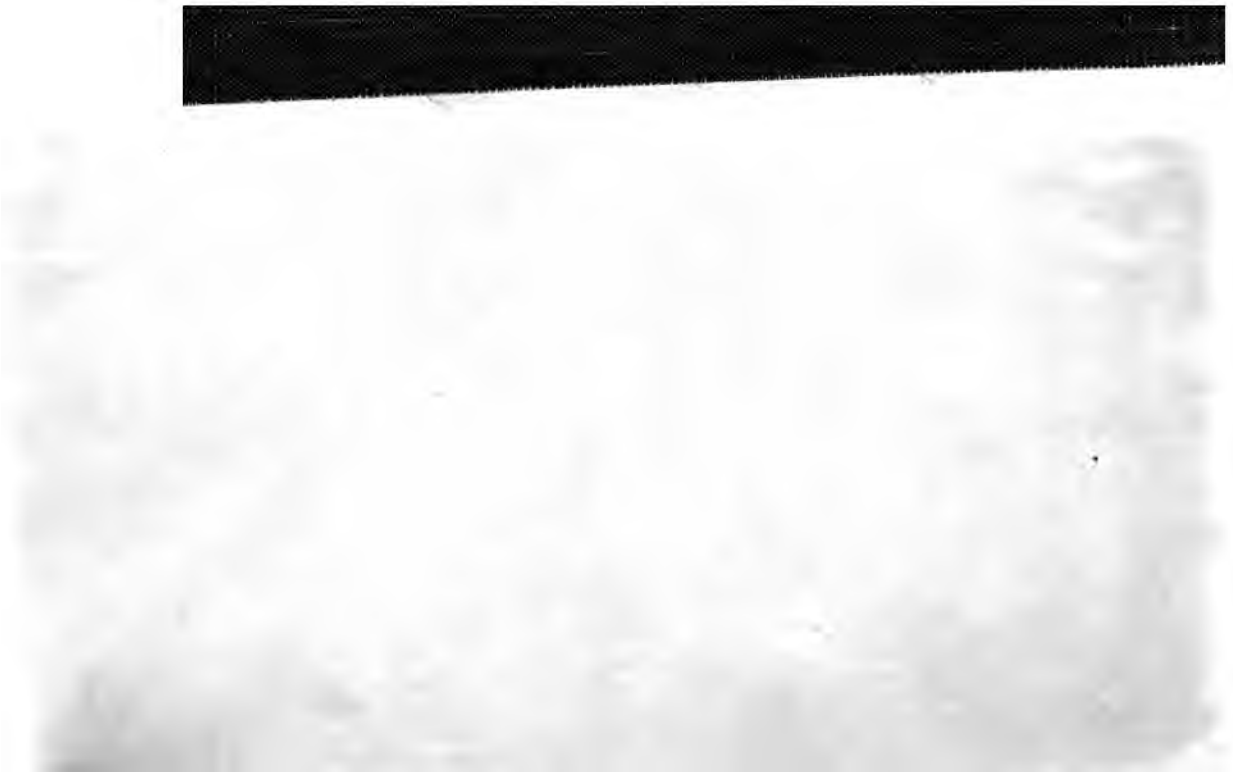

# THE WORKS OF LUCIAN OF SAMOSATA

Complete with exceptions specified in the preface

TRANSLATED BY

H. W. FOWLER AND F. G. FOWLER

IN FOUR VOLUMES

What work nobler than transplanting foreign thought into the barren domestic soil? except indeed planting thought of your own, which the fewest are privileged to do.—*Sartor Resartus.*

At each flaw, be this your first thought: the author doubtless said something quite different, and much more to the point. And then you may hiss *me* off, if you will.—LUCIAN, *Nigrinus*, 9.

(LUCIAN) The last great master of Attic eloquence and Attic wit.—*Lord Macaulay.*

VOLUME I

OXFORD
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HENRY FROWDE, M.A.
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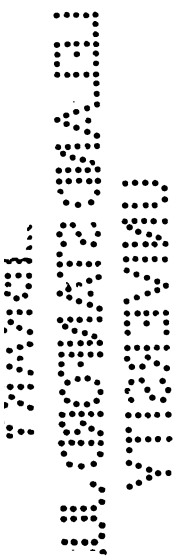

# PREFACE

THE text followed in this translation is that of Jacobitz, Teubner, 1901, all deviations from which are noted.

In the following list of omissions, italics denote that the piece is marked as spurious both by Dindorf and by Jacobitz. The other omissions are mainly by way of expurgation. In a very few other passages some isolated words and phrases have been excised; but it has not been thought necessary to mark these in the texts by asterisks.

*Halcyon;* Deorum Dialogi, iv, v, ix, x, xvii, xxii, xxiii; Dialogi Marini, xiii; Vera Historia, I. 22, II. 19; Alexander, 41, 42; Eunuchus; *De Astrologia*; *Amores*; *Lucius* sive *Asinus*; Rhetorum Preceptor, 23; *Hippias*; Adversus Indoctum, 23; Pseudologista; *Longaevi*; Dialogi Meretricii, v, vi, x; De Syria Dea; *Philopatris; Charidemus; Nero;* Tragodopodagra; Ocypus; Epigrammata.

A word may be said about four pieces that seem to stand apart from the rest. Of these, the *Trial in the Court of Vowels* and *A Slip of the Tongue* will be interesting only to those who are familiar with Greek. The *Lexiphanes* and *A Purist Purized*, satirizing the pedants and euphuists of Lucian's day, almost defy translation, and they must be accepted at best as an effort to give the general effect of the original.

The *Notes explanatory* at the end of vol. iv will be used by the reader at his discretion. Reference is made to them at the foot of the page only when it is not obvious what name should be consulted.

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The translators take this opportunity of offering their heartiest thanks to the Delegates of the Clarendon Press for undertaking this work; and, in particular, to the Vice-Chancellor of Oxford University, Dr. Merry, who has been good enough to read the proofs, and to give much valuable advice both on the difficult subject of excision and on details of style and rendering. In this connexion, however, it should be added that for the retention of many modern phrases, which may offend some readers as anachronistic, responsibility rests with the translators alone.

# CONTENTS OF VOL. I


PAGE

PREFACE . . . . . iii

INTRODUCTION . . . . . vii

THE VISION . . . . . 1
*Περὶ τοῦ ἐνυπνίου, ἤτοι βίος Λουκιανοῦ.*

A LITERARY PROMETHEUS . . . . . 7
*Πρὸς τὸν εἰπόντα, Προμηθεὺς εἶ ἐν λόγοις.*

NIGRINUS . . . . . 11
*Πρὸς Νιγρῖνον ἐπιστολή.*

TRIAL IN THE COURT OF VOWELS . . . . . 26
*Δίκη Φωνηέντων.*

TIMON THE MISANTHROPE . . . . . 31
*Τίμων, ἢ Μισάνθρωπος.*

PROMETHEUS ON CAUCASUS . . . . . 53
*Προμηθεύς, ἢ Καύκασος.*

DIALOGUES OF THE GODS . . . . . 62–89
*Θεῶν διάλογοι.*

I, 62; II, 63; III, 64; VI, 65; VII, 67; VIII, 68; XI, 69; XII, 70; XIII, 71; XIV, 72; XV, 73; XVI, 74; XVIII, 76; XIX, 77; XX, 78; XXI, 85; XXIV, 86; XXV, 87; XXVI, 89.

DIALOGUES OF THE SEA-GODS . . . . . 90–106
*Ἐνάλιοι διάλογοι.*

I, 90; II, 91; III, 93; IV, 94; V, 95; VI, 96; VII, 97; VIII, 98; IX, 99; X, 100; XI, 101; XII, 102; XIV, 103; XV, 105.

PAGE

DIALOGUES OF THE DEAD . . . . . 107–156

*Νεκρικοὶ διάλογοι*

I, 107; II, 109; III, 110; IV, 111; V, 112; VI, 113; VII, 115; VIII, 116; IX, 117; X, 119; XI, 123; XII, 125; XIII, 129; XIV, 131; XV, 133; XVI, 134; XVII, 136; XVIII, 137; XIX, 138; XX, 139; XXI, 142; XXII, 143; XXIII, 144; XXIV, 145; XXV, 147; XXVI, 148; XXVII, 149; XXVIII, 152; XXIX, 153; XXX, 154.

MENIPPUS . . . . . 156

*Μένιππος, ἢ Νεκυομαντεία.*

CHARON . . . . . 167

*Χάρων, ἢ Ἐπισκοποῦντες.*

OF SACRIFICE . . . . . 183

*Περὶ θυσιῶν.*

SALE OF CREEDS . . . . . 190

*Βίων πρᾶσις.*

THE FISHER . . . . . 206

*Ἁλιεύς, ἢ Ἀναβιωῦντες.*

VOYAGE TO THE LOWER WORLD . . . . . 230

*Κατάπλους, ἢ Τύραννος.*

# INTRODUCTION

1. Life.
2. Probable Order of Writings.
3. Circumstances of the Time.
4. Lucian as a Writer.

It is not to be understood that all statements here made are either ascertained facts or universally admitted conjectures. The introduction is intended merely to put those who are not scholars, and probably have not books of reference at hand, in a position to approach the translation at as little disadvantage as may be. Accordingly, we give the account that commends itself to us, without discussion or reference to authorities. Those who would like a more complete idea of Lucian should read Croiset's *Essai sur la vie et les œuvres de Lucien*, on which the first two sections of this introduction are very largely based. The only objections to the book (if they are objections) are that it is in French, and of 400 octavo pages. It is eminently readable.

## 1. Life

With the exception of a very small number of statements, of which the truth is by no means certain, all that we know of Lucian is derived from his own writings. And any reader who prefers to have his facts at first rather than at second hand can consequently get them by reading certain of his pieces, and making the natural deductions from them. Those that contain biographical matter are, in the order corresponding to

the periods of his life on which they throw light, *The Vision*, *Demosthenes*, *Nigrinus*, *The Portrait-study* and *Defence* (in which Lucian is *Lycinus*), *The Way to write History*, *The double Indictment* (in which he is *The Syrian*), *The Fisher* (*Parrhesiades*), *Swans and Amber*, *Alexander*, *Hermotimus* (*Lycinus*), *Menippus and Icaromenippus* (in which *Menippus* represents him), *A literary Prometheus*, *Herodotus*, *Zeuxis*, *Harmonides*, *The Scythian*, *The Death of Peregrine*, *The Book-fancier*, *Demonax*, *The Rhetorician's Vade mecum*, *Dionysus*, *Heracles*, *A Slip of the Tongue*, *Apology for 'The dependent Scholar.'* Of these *The Vision* is a direct piece of autobiography; there is intentional but veiled autobiography in several of the other pieces; in others again conclusions can be drawn from comparison of his statements with facts known from external sources.

Lucian lived from about 125 to about 200 A.D., under the Roman Emperors Antoninus Pius, M. Aurelius and Lucius Verus, Commodus, and perhaps Pertinax. He was a Syrian, born at Samosata on the Euphrates, of parents to whom it was of importance that he should earn his living without spending much time or money on education. His maternal uncle being a statuary, he was apprenticed to him, having shown an aptitude for modelling in the wax that he surreptitiously scraped from his school writing-tablets. The apprenticeship lasted one day. It is clear that he was impulsive all through life; and when his uncle corrected him with a stick for breaking a piece of marble, he ran off home, disposed already to think he had had enough of statuary. His mother took his part, and he made up his mind by the aid of a vision that came to him the same night.

It was the age of the rhetoricians. If war was not a thing of the past, the shadow of the *pax Romana* was over all the small states, and the aspiring provincial's readiest road to fame was through words rather than deeds. The arrival of a famous

rhetorician to lecture was one of the important events in any great city's annals; and Lucian's works are full of references to the impression these men produced, and the envy they enjoyed. He himself was evidently consumed, during his youth and early manhood, with desire for a position like theirs. To him, sleeping with memories of the stick, appeared two women, corresponding to *Virtue* and *Pleasure* in Prodicus's *Choice of Heracles*—the working woman *Statuary*, and the lady *Culture*. They advanced their claims to him in turn; but before *Culture* had completed her reply, the choice was made: he was to be a rhetorician. From her reminding him that she was even now not all unknown to him, we may perhaps assume that he spoke some sort of Greek, or was being taught it; but he assures us that after leaving Syria he was still a barbarian; we have also a casual mention of his offering a lock of his hair to the Syrian goddess in his youth.

He was allowed to follow his bent and go to Ionia. Great Ionian cities like Smyrna and Ephesus were full of admired sophists or teachers of rhetoric. But it is unlikely that Lucian's means would have enabled him to become the pupil of these. He probably acquired his skill to a great extent by the laborious method, which he ironically deprecates in *The Rhetorician's Vade mecum*, of studying exhaustively the old Attic orators, poets, and historians.

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*Demosthenes*, suggest (4). A common form of exhibition was for a sophist to appear before an audience and let them propose subjects, of which he must choose one and deliver an impromptu oration upon it.

Whatever his exact line was, he earned an income in Ionia, then in Greece, had still greater success in Italy, and appears to have settled for some time in Gaul, perhaps occupying a professorial chair there. The intimate knowledge of Roman life in some aspects which appears in *The dependent Scholar* suggests that he also lived some time in Rome. He seems to have known some Latin, since he could converse with boatmen on the Po; but his only clear reference (*A Slip of the Tongue*, 13) implies an imperfect knowledge of it; and there is not a single mention in all his works, which are crammed with literary allusions, of any Latin author. He claims to have been during his time in Gaul one of the rhetoricians who could command high fees; and his descriptions of himself as resigning his place close about his lady's (i.e. Rhetoric's) person, and as casting off his wife Rhetoric because she did not keep herself exclusively to him, show that he regarded himself, or wished to be regarded, as having been at the head of his profession.

This brings us to about the year 160 A.D. We may conceive Lucian now to have had some of that yearning for home which he ascribes in the *Patriotism* even to the successful exile. He returned home, we suppose, a distinguished man at thirty-five, and enjoyed impressing the fact on his fellow citizens in *The Vision*. He may then have lived at Antioch as a rhetorician for some years, of which we have a memorial in *The Portrait-study*. Lucius Verus, M. Aurelius's colleague, was at Antioch in 162 or 163 A.D. on his way to the Parthian war, and *The Portrait-study* is a panegyric on Verus's mistress Panthea, whom Lucian saw there.

A year or two later we find him migrating to Athens, taking

his father with him, and at Athens he settled and remained many years. It was on this journey that the incident occurred, which he relates with such a curious absence of shame in the *Alexander*, of his biting that charlatan's hand.

This change in his manner of life corresponds nearly with the change in habit of mind and use of his powers that earned him his immortality. His fortieth year is the date given by himself for his abandonment of Rhetoric and, as he calls it, taking up with Dialogue, or, as we might say, becoming a man of letters. Between Rhetoric and Dialogue there was a feud, which had begun when Socrates five centuries before had fought his battles with the sophists. Rhetoric appeals to the emotions and obscures the issues (such had been Socrates's position); the way to elicit truth is by short question and answer. The Socratic method, illustrated by Plato, had become, if not the only, the accredited instrument of philosophers, who, so far as they are genuine, are truth-seekers; Rhetoric had been left to the legal persons whose object is not truth but victory. Lucian's abandonment of Rhetoric was accordingly in some sort his change from a lawyer to a philosopher. As it turned out, however, philosophy was itself only a transitional stage with him.

Already during his career as a rhetorician, which we may put at 145–164 A.D., he seems both to have had leanings to philosophy, and to have toyed with dialogue. There is reason to suppose that the *Nigrinus*, with its strong contrast between the noise and vulgarity of Rome and the peace and culture of Athens, its enthusiastic picture of the charm of philosophy for a sensitive and intelligent spirit, was written in 150 A.D., or at any rate described an incident that occurred in that year; and the *Portrait-study* and its *Defence*, dialogues written with great care, whatever their other merits, belong to 162 or 163 A.D. But these had been excursions out of his own province. After settling at Athens he seems to have adopted the writing of

dialogues as his regular work. The *Toxaris*, a collection of stories on friendship, strung together by dialogue, the *Anacharsis*, a discussion on the value of physical training, and the *Pantomime*, a description slightly relieved by the dialogue form, may be regarded as experiments with his new instrument. There is no trace in them of the characteristic use that he afterwards made of dialogue, for the purposes of satire.

That was an idea that we may suppose to have occurred to him after the composition of the *Hermotimus*. This is in form the most philosophic of his dialogues; it might indeed be a dialogue of Plato, of the merely destructive kind; but it is at the same time, in matter, his farewell to philosophy, establishing that the pursuit of it is hopeless for mortal man. From this time onward, though he always professes himself a lover of true philosophy, he concerns himself no more with it, except to expose its false professors. The dialogue that perhaps comes next, *The Parasite*, is still Platonic in form, but only as a parody; its main interest (for a modern reader is outraged, as in a few other pieces of Lucian's, by the disproportion between subject and treatment) is in the combination for the first time of satire with dialogue.

One more step remained to be taken. In the piece called *A literary Prometheus*, we are told what Lucian himself regarded as his claim to the title of an original writer. It was the fusing of Comedy and Dialogue—the latter being the prose conversation that had hitherto been confined to philosophical discussion. The new literary form, then, was conversation, frankly for purposes of entertainment, as in Comedy, but to be read and not acted. In this kind of writing he remains, though he has been often imitated, first in merit as clearly as in time; and nearly all his great masterpieces took this form. They followed in rapid succession, being all written, perhaps, between 165 and 175 A.D. And we make here no further comment upon them, except to

remark that they fall roughly into three groups as he drew inspiration successively from the writers of the New Comedy (or Comedy of ordinary life) like Menander, from the satires of Menippus, and from writers of the Old Comedy (or Comedy of fantastic imagination) like Aristophanes. The best specimens of the first group are *The Liar* and the *Dialogues of the Hetaerae*; of the second, the *Dialogues of the Dead* and *of the Gods*, *Menippus* and *Icaromenippus*, *Zeus cross-examined*; of the third, *Timon*, *Charon*, *A Voyage to the lower World*, *The Sale of Creeds*, *The Fisher*, *Zeus Tragoedus*, *The Cock*, *The double Indictment*, *The Ship*.

During these ten or more years, though he lived at Athens, he is to be imagined travelling occasionally, to read his dialogues to audiences in various cities, or to see the Olympic Games. And these excursions gave occasion to some works not of the dialogue kind; the *Zeuxis* and several similar pieces are introductions to series of readings away from Athens; *The Way to write History*, a piece of literary criticism still very readable, if out of date for practical purposes, resulted from a visit to Ionia, where all the literary men were producing histories of the Parthian war, then in progress (165 A.D.). An attendance at the Olympic Games of 169 A.D. suggested *The Death of Peregrine*, which in its turn, through the offence given to Cynics, had to be supplemented by the dialogue of *The Runaways*. *The True History*, most famous, but, admirable as it is, far from best of his works, presumably belongs to this period also, but cannot be definitely placed. *The Book-fancier* and *The Rhetorician's Vade mecum* are unpleasant records of bitter personal quarrels.

After some ten years of this intense literary activity, producing, reading, and publishing, Lucian seems to have given up both the writing of dialogues and the presenting of them to audiences, and to have lived quietly for many years. The only pieces that belong here are the *Life of Demonax*, the man

whom he held the best of all philosophers, and with whom he had been long intimate at Athens, and that of Alexander, the Asiatic charlatan, who was the prince of impostors as Demonax of philosophers. When quite old, Lucian was appointed by the Emperor Commodus to a well-paid legal post in Egypt. We also learn, from the new introductory lectures called *Dionysus* and *Heracles*, that he resumed the practice of reading his dialogues; but he wrote nothing more of importance. It is stated in Suidas that he was torn to pieces by dogs; but, as other statements in the article are discredited, it is supposed that this is the Christian revenge for Lucian's imaginary hostility to Christianity. We have it from himself that he suffered from gout in his old age. He solaced himself characteristically by writing a play on the subject; but whether the goddess Gout, who gave it its name, was appeased by it, or carried him off, we cannot tell.

### 2. Probable Order of Writings

The received order in which Lucian's works stand is admitted to be entirely haphazard. The following arrangement in groups is roughly chronological, though it is quite possible that they overlap each other. It is M. Croiset's, put into tabular form. Many details in it are open to question; but to read in this order would at least be more satisfactory to any one who wishes to study Lucian seriously than to take the pieces as they come. The table will also serve as a rough guide to the first-class and the inferior pieces. The names italicized are those of pieces rejected as spurious by M. Croiset, and therefore not placed by him; we have inserted them where they seem to belong; as to their genuineness, it is our opinion that the objections made (not by M. Croiset, who does not discuss authenticity) to the *Demosthenes* and *The Cynic* at least are, in view of the merits of these, unconvincing.

(i) About 145 to 160 A.D. Lucian a rhetorician in Ionia, Greece, Italy, and Gaul.
The Tyrannicide, a rhetorical exercise.
The Disinherited.
Phalaris I & II.
*Demosthenes*, a panegyric.
Patriotism, an essay.
The Fly, an essay.
Swans and Amber, an introductory lecture.
Dipsas, an introductory lecture.
The Hall, an introductory lecture.
Nigrinus, a dialogue on philosophy, 150 A.D.

(ii) About 160 to 164 A.D. After Lucian's return to Asia.
The Portrait-study, a panegyric in dialogue, 162 A.D.
Defence of The Portrait-study, in dialogue.
A Trial in the Court of Vowels, a *jeu d'esprit*.
Hesiod, a short dialogue.
The Vision, an autobiographical address.

(iii) About 165 A.D. At Athens.
Pantomime, art criticism in dialogue.
Anacharsis, a dialogue on physical training.
Toxaris, stories of friendship in dialogue.
Slander, a moral essay.
The Way to write History, an essay in literary criticism.

The next eight groups, iv–xi, belong to the years from about 165 A.D. to about 175 A.D., when Lucian was at his best and busiest; iv–ix are to be regarded roughly as succeeding each other in time; x and xi being independent in this respect. Pieces are assigned to groups mainly according to their subjects; but some are placed in groups that do not seem at first sight the most appropriate, owing to specialities in their treatment; e.g. *The Ship* might seem more in place with vii than with ix;

but M. Croiset finds in it a maturity that induces him to put it later.

(iv) About 165 A.D.
Hermotimus, a philosophic dialogue.
The Parasite, a parody of a philosophic dialogue.

(v) Influence of the New Comedy writers.
The Liar, a dialogue satirizing superstition.
A Feast of Lapithae, a dialogue satirizing the manners of philosophers.
Dialogues of the Hetaerae, a series of short dialogues.

(vi) Influence of the Menippean satire.
Dialogues of the Dead, a series of short dialogues.
Dialogues of the Gods, a series of short dialogues.
Dialogues of the Sea-Gods, a series of short dialogues.
Menippus, a dialogue satirizing philosophy.
Icaromenippus, a dialogue satirizing philosophy and religion.
Zeus cross-examined, a dialogue satirizing religion.
*The Cynic*, a dialogue against luxury.
*Of Sacrifice*, an essay satirizing religion.
Saturnalia, dialogue and letters on the relation of rich and poor.
The True History, a parody of the old Greek historians.

(vii) Influence of the Old Comedy writers: vanity of human wishes.
A Voyage to the Lower World, a dialogue on the vanity of power.
Charon, a dialogue on the vanity of all things.
Timon, a dialogue on the vanity of riches.
The Cock, a dialogue on the vanity of riches and power.

(viii) Influence of the Old Comedy writers: dialogues satirizing religion.
Prometheus on Caucasus.

Zeus Tragoedus.
The Gods in Council.

(ix) Influence of the Old Comedy writers: satire on philosophers.
The Ship, a dialogue on foolish aspirations.
The Life of Peregrine, a narrative satirizing the Cynics, 169 A.D.
The Runaways, a dialogue satirizing the Cynics.
The double Indictment, an autobiographic dialogue.
The Sale of Creeds, a dialogue satirizing philosophers.
The Fisher, an autobiographic dialogue satirizing philosophers.

(x) 165–175 A.D. Introductory lectures.
Herodotus.
Zeuxis.
Harmonides.
The Scythian.
A literary Prometheus.

(xi) 165–175 A.D. Scattered pieces standing apart from the great dialogue series, but written during the same period.
The Book-fancier, an invective. About 170 A.D.
*The Purist purized*, a literary satire in dialogue.
Lexiphanes, a literary satire in dialogue.
The Rhetorician's Vade-mecum, a personal satire. About 178 A.D.

(xii) After 180 A.D.
Demonax, a biography.
Alexander, a satirical biography.

(xiii) In old age.
Mourning, an essay.
Dionysus, an introductory lecture.
Heracles, an introductory lecture.

Apology for 'The dependent Scholar.'
A Slip of the Tongue.

In conclusion, we have to say that this arrangement of M. Croiset's, which we have merely tabulated without intentionally departing from it in any particular, seems to us well considered in its broad lines; there are a few modifications which we should have been disposed to make in it; but we thought it better to take it entire than to exercise our own judgement in a matter where we felt very little confidence.

### 3. Circumstances of the Time

'M. Aurelius has for us moderns this great superiority in interest over Saint Louis or Alfred, that he lived and acted in a state of society modern by its essential characteristics, in an epoch akin to our own, in a brilliant centre of civilization. Trajan talks of "our enlightened age" just as glibly as *The Times* talks of it.' M. Arnold, *Essays in Criticism, M. Aurelius.*

The age of M. Aurelius is also the age of Lucian, and with any man of that age who has, like these two, left us a still legible message we can enter into quite different relations from those which are possible with what M. Arnold calls in the same essay 'classical-dictionary heroes.' A twentieth-century Englishman, a second-century Greek or Roman, would be much more at home in each other's century, if they had the gift of tongues, than in most of those which have intervened. It is neither necessary nor possible to go deeply into the resemblance here[1]; all that need be done is to pass in review those points

[1] Some words of Sir Leslie Stephen's may be given, however, describing the welter of religious opinions that prevailed at both epochs: 'The analogy between the present age and that which witnessed the introduction of Christianity is too striking to have been missed by very many observers. The most superficial acquaintance with the general facts shows how close a parallel might be drawn by a competent historian. There are none of the striking manifestations of the present day to which it would

of it, some important, and some trifling, which are sure to occur in a detached way to readers of Lucian.

The Graeco-Roman world was as settled and peaceful, as conscious of its imperial responsibilities, as susceptible to boredom, as greedy of amusement, could show as numerous a leisured class, and believed as firmly in money, as our own. What is more important for our purpose, it was questioning the truth of its religion as we are to-day questioning the truth of ours. Lucian was the most vehement of the questioners. Of what played the part then that the Christian religion plays now, the pagan religion was only one half; the other half was philosophy. The gods of Olympus had long lost their hold upon the educated, but not perhaps upon the masses; the educated, ill content to be without any guide through the maze of life, had taken to philosophy instead. Stoicism was the prevalent creed, and how noble a form this could take in a cultivated and

not be easy to produce an analogy, though in some respects on a smaller scale. Now, as then, we can find mystical philosophers trying to evolve a satisfactory creed by some process of logical legerdemain out of theosophical moonshine; and amiable and intelligent persons labouring hard to prove that the old mythology could be forced to accept a rationalistic interpretation—whether in regard to the inspection of entrails or prayers for fine weather; and philosophers framing systems of morality entirely apart from the ancient creeds, and sufficiently satisfactory to themselves, while hopelessly incapable of impressing the popular mind; and politicians, conscious that the basis of social order was being sapped by the decay of the faith in which it had arisen, and therefore attempting the impossible task of galvanizing dead creeds into a semblance of vitality; and strange superstitions creeping out of their lurking-places, and gaining influence in a luxurious society whose intelligence was an ineffectual safeguard against the most grovelling errors; and a dogged adherence of formalists and conservatives to ancient ways, and much empty profession of barren orthodoxy; and, beneath all, a vague disquiet, a breaking up of ancient social and natural bonds, and a blind groping toward some more cosmopolitan creed and some deeper satisfaction for the emotional needs of mankind.'—*The Religion of all Sensible Men* in *An Agnostic's Apology*, 1893.

virtuous mind is to be seen in the *Thoughts* of M. Aurelius. The test of a religion, however, is not what form it takes in a virtuous mind, but what effects it produces on those of another sort. Lucian applies the test of results alike to the religion usually so called, and to its philosophic substitute. He finds both wanting; the test is not a satisfactory one, but it is being applied by all sorts and conditions of men to Christianity in our own time; so is the second test, that of inherent probability, which he uses as well as the other upon the pagan theology; and it is this that gives his writings, even apart from their wit and fancy, a special interest for our own time. Our attention seems to be concentrated more and more on the ethical, as opposed to the speculative or dogmatic aspect of religion; just such was Lucian's attitude towards philosophy.

Some minor points of similarity may be briefly noted. As we read the *Anacharsis*, we are reminded of the modern prominence of athletics; the question of football *versus* drill is settled for us; light is thrown upon the question of conscription; we think of our Commissions on national deterioration, and the schoolmaster's wail over the athletic *Frankenstein's* monster which, like *Eucrates* in *The Liar*, he has created but cannot control. The 'horsy talk in every street' of the *Nigrinus* calls up the London newsboy with his 'All the winners.' We think of palmists and spiritualists in the police-courts as we read of Rutilianus and the Roman nobles consulting the impostor Alexander. This sentence reads like the description of a modern man of science confronted with the supernatural: 'It was an occasion for a man whose intelligence was steeled against such assaults by scepticism and insight, one who, if he could not detect the precise imposture, would at any rate have been perfectly certain that, though this escaped him, the whole thing was a lie and an impossibility.' The upper-class audiences who

listened to Lucian's readings, taking his points with quiet smiles instead of the loud applause given to the rhetorician, must have been something like that which listens decorously to an Extension lecturer. When Lucian bids us mark 'how many there are who once were but cyphers, but whom words have raised to fame and opulence, ay, and to noble lineage too,' we remember not only Gibbon's remark about the very Herodes Atticus of whom Lucian may have been thinking ('The family of Herod, at least after it had been favoured by fortune, was lineally descended from Cimon and Miltiades'), but also the modern *carrière ouverte aux talents*, and the fact that Tennyson was a lord. There are the elements of a socialist question in the feelings between rich and poor described in the *Saturnalia*; while, on the other hand, the fact of there being an audience for the *Dialogues of the Hetaerae* is an illustration of that spirit of *humani nihil a me alienum puto* which is again prevalent to-day. We care now to realize the thoughts of other classes besides our own; so did they in Lucian's time; but it is significant that Francklin in 1780, refusing to translate this series, says: 'These dialogues exhibit to us only such kind of conversation as we may hear in the purlieus of Covent Garden—lewd, dull, and insipid.' The lewdness hardly goes beyond the title; they are full of humour and insight; and we make no apology for translating most of them. Lastly, a generation that is always complaining of the modern over-production of books feels that it would be at home in a state of society in which our author found that, not to be too singular, he must at least write about writing history, if he declined writing it himself, even as Diogenes took to rolling his tub, lest he should be the only idle man when Corinth was bustling about its defences.

As Lucian is so fond of saying, 'this is but a small selection of the facts which might have been quoted' to illustrate the likeness between our age and his. It may be well to allude, on

the other hand, to a few peculiarities of the time that appear conspicuously in his writings.

The Roman Empire was rather Graeco-Roman than Roman; this is now a commonplace. It is interesting to observe that for Lucian 'we' is on occasion the Romans; 'we' is also everywhere the Greeks; while at the same time 'I' is a barbarian and a Syrian. Roughly speaking, the Roman element stands for energy, material progress, authority, and the Greek for thought; the Roman is the British Philistine, the Greek the man of culture. Lucian is conscious enough of the distinction, and there is no doubt where his own preference lies. He may be a materialist, so far as he is anything, in philosophy; but in practice he puts the things of the mind before the things of the body.

If our own age supplies parallels for most of what we meet with in the second century, there are two phenomena which are to be matched rather in an England that has passed away. The first is the Cynics, who swarm in Lucian's pages like the begging friars in those of a historical novelist painting the middle ages. Like the friars, they began nobly in the desire for plain living and high thinking; in both cases the thinking became plain, the living not perhaps high, but the best that circumstances admitted of, and the class—with its numbers hugely swelled by persons as little like their supposed teachers as a Marian or Elizabethan persecutor was like the founder of Christianity—a pest to society. Lucian's sympathy with the best Cynics, and detestation of the worst, make Cynicism one of his most familiar themes. The second is the class so vividly presented in *The dependent Scholar*—the indigent learned Greek who looks about for a rich vulgar Roman to buy his company, and finds he has the worst of the bargain. His successors, the 'trencher chaplains' who 'from grasshoppers turn humblebees and wasps, plain parasites, and make the Muses mules, to

satisfy their hunger-starved panches, and get a meal's meat,' were commoner in Burton's days than in our own, and are to be met in Fielding, and Macaulay, and Thackeray.

Two others of Lucian's favourite figures, the parasite and the legacy-hunter, exist still, no doubt, as they are sure to in every complex civilization; but their operations are now conducted with more regard to the decencies. This is worth remembering when we are occasionally offended by his frankness on subjects to which we are not accustomed to allude; he is not an unclean or a sensual writer, but the waters of decency have risen since his time and submerged some things which were then visible.

A slight prejudice, again, may sometimes be aroused by Lucian's trick of constant and trivial quotation; he would rather put the simplest statement, or even make his transition from one subject to another, in words of Homer than in his own; we have modern writers too who show the same tendency, and perhaps we like or dislike them for it in proportion as their allusions recall memories or merely puzzle us; we cannot all be expected to have agreeable memories stirred by insignificant Homer tags; and it is well to bear in mind by way of palliation that in Greek education Homer played as great a part as the Bible in ours. He might be taken simply or taken allegorically; but one way or the other he was the staple of education, and it might be assumed that every one would like the mere sound of him.

We may end by remarking that the public readings of his own works, to which the author makes frequent reference, were what served to a great extent the purpose of our printing-press. We know that his pieces were also published; but the public that could be reached by hand-written copies would bear a very small proportion to that which heard them from the writer's own lips; and though the modern system may have the advantage on the whole, it is hard to believe that the un-

approached life and naturalness of Lucian's dialogue does not owe something to this necessity.

### 4. Lucian as a Writer

With all the sincerity of Lucian in *The True History*, 'soliciting his reader's incredulity,' we solicit our reader's neglect of this appreciation. We have no pretensions whatever to the critical faculty; the following remarks are to be taken as made with diffidence, and offered to those only who prefer being told what to like, and why, to settling the matter for themselves.

Goethe, aged fourteen, with seven languages on hand, devised the plan of a correspondence kept up by seven imaginary brothers scattered over the globe, each writing in the language of his adopted land. The stay-at-home in Frankfort was to write Jew-German, for which purpose some Hebrew must be acquired. His father sent him to Rector Albrecht. The rector was always found with one book open before him—a well-thumbed Lucian. But the Hebrew vowel-points were perplexing, and the boy found better amusement in putting shrewd questions on what struck him as impossibilities or inconsistencies in the Old-Testament narrative they were reading. The old gentleman was infinitely amused, had fits of mingled coughing and laughter, but made little attempt at solving his pupil's difficulties, beyond ejaculating *Er närrischer Kerl! Er närrischer Junge!* He let him dig for solutions, however, in an English commentary on the shelves, and occupied the time with turning the familiar pages of his Lucian[1]. The wicked old rector perhaps chuckled to think that here was one who bade fair to love Lucian one day as well as he did himself.

For Lucian too was one who asked questions—spent his life doing little else; if one were invited to draw him with the least possible expenditure of ink, one's pen would trace a mark

[1] *Wahrheit und Dichtung*, book iv.

of interrogation. That picture is easily drawn; to put life into it is a more difficult matter. However, his is not a complex character, for all the irony in which he sometimes chooses to clothe his thought; and materials are at least abundant; he is one of the self-revealing fraternity; his own personal presence is to be detected more often than not in his work. He may give us the assistance, or he may not, of labelling a character *Lucian* or *Lycinus*; we can detect him, *volentes volentem*, under the thin disguise of *Menippus* or *Tychiades* or *Cyniscus* as well. And the essence of him as he reveals himself is the questioning spirit. He has no respect for authority. Burke describes the majority of mankind, who do not form their own opinions, as 'those whom Providence has doomed to live on trust'; Lucian entirely refuses to live on trust; he 'wants to know.' It was the wish of *Arthur Clennam*, who had in consequence a very bad name among the *Tite Barnacles* and other persons in authority. Lucian has not escaped the same fate; 'the scoffer Lucian' has become as much a commonplace as '*fidus Achates*,' or 'the well-greaved Achaeans,' the reading of him has been discountenanced, and, if he has not actually lost his place at the table of Immortals, promised him when he temporarily left the Island of the Blest, it has not been so 'distinguished' a place as it was to have been and should have been. And all because he 'wanted to know.'

His questions, of course, are not all put in the same manner. In the *Dialogues of the Gods*, for instance, the mark of interrogation is not writ large; they have almost the air at first of little stories in dialogue form, which might serve to instruct schoolboys in the attributes and legends of the gods—a manual charmingly done, yet a manual only. But we soon see that he has said to himself: Let us put the thing into plain natural prose, and see what it looks like with its glamour of poetry and reverence stripped off; the Gods do human things; why not represent

them as human persons, and see what results? What did result was that henceforth any one who still believed in the pagan deities might at the cost of an hour's light reading satisfy himself that his gods were not gods, or, if they were, had no business to be. Whether many or few did so read and so satisfy themselves, we have no means of knowing; it is easy to over-estimate the effect such writing may have had, and to forget that those who were capable of being convinced by exposition of this sort would mostly be those who were already convinced without; still, so far as Lucian had any effect on the religious position, it must have been in discrediting paganism and increasing the readiness to accept the new faith beginning to make its way. Which being so, it was ungrateful of the Christian church to turn and rend him. It did so, partly in error. Lucian had referred in the *Life of Peregrine* to the Christians, in words which might seem irreverent to Christians at a time when they were no longer an obscure sect; he had described and ridiculed in *The Liar* certain 'Syrian' miracles which have a remarkable likeness to the casting out of spirits by Christ and the apostles; and worse still, the *Philopatris* passed under his name. This dialogue, unlike what Lucian had written in the *Peregrine* and *The Liar*, is a deliberate attack on Christianity. It is clear to us now that it was written two hundred years after his time, under Julian the Apostate; but there can be no more doubt of its being an imitation of Lucian than of its not being his; it consequently passed for his, the story gained currency that he was an apostate himself, and his name was anathema for the church. It was only partly in error, however. Though Lucian might be useful on occasion ('When Tertullian or Lactantius employ their labours in exposing the falsehood and extravagance of Paganism, they are obliged to transcribe the eloquence of Cicero or the wit of Lucian'[1]), the very word heretic is

[1] Gibbon, *Decline and Fall*, cap. xv.

enough to remind us that the Church could not show much favour to one who insisted always on thinking for himself. His works survived, but he was not read, through the Middle Ages. With the Renaissance he partly came into his own again, but still laboured under the imputations of scoffing and atheism, which confined the reading of him to the few.

The method followed in the *Dialogues of the Gods* and similar pieces is a very indirect way of putting questions. It is done much more directly in others, the *Zeus cross-examined*, for instance. Since the fallen angels

> reasoned high
> Of Providence, Foreknowledge, Will, and Fate—
> Fixed fate, free will, foreknowledge absolute—
> And found no end, in wandering mazes lost,

these subjects have had their share of attention; but the questions can hardly be put more directly, or more neatly, than in the *Zeus cross-examined*, and the thirtieth *Dialogue of the Dead*.

He has many other interrogative methods besides these, which may be left to reveal themselves in the course of reading. As for answering questions, that is another matter. The answer is sometimes apparent, sometimes not; he will not refrain from asking a question just because he does not know the answer; his *rôle* is asking, not answering. Nor when he gives an answer is it always certain whether it is to be taken in earnest. Was he a cynic? one would say so after reading *The Cynic*; was he an Epicurean? one would say so after reading the *Alexander*; was he a philosopher? one would say Yes at a certain point of the *Hermotimus*, No at another. He doubtless had his moods, and he was quite unhampered by desire for any consistency except consistent independence of judgement. Moreover, the difficulty of getting at his real opinions is increased by the fact that he was an ironist. We have called him a self-revealer; but you never quite know where to have an ironical self-revealer.

Goethe has the useful phrase, ' direct irony '; a certain German writer ' makes too free a use of direct irony, praising the blameworthy and blaming the praiseworthy—a rhetorical device which should be very sparingly employed. In the long run it disgusts the sensible and misleads the dull, pleasing only the great intermediate class to whom it offers the satisfaction of being able to think themselves more shrewd than other people, without expending much thought of their own ' (*Wahrheit und Dichtung*, book vii). Fielding gives us in *Jonathan Wild* a sustained piece of ' direct irony ' ; you have only to reverse everything said, and you get the author's meaning. Lucian's irony is not of that sort; you cannot tell when you are to reverse him, only that you will have sometimes to do so. He does use the direct kind; *The Rhetorician's Vade mecum* and *The Parasite* are examples; the latter is also an example (unless a translator, who is condemned not to skip or skim, is an unfair judge) of how tiresome it may become. But who shall say how much of irony and how much of genuine feeling there is in the fine description of the philosophic State given in the *Hermotimus* (with its suggestions of *Christian* in *The Pilgrim's Progress*, and of the ' not many wise men after the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble '), or in the whimsical extravagance (as it strikes a modern) of the *Pantomime*, or in the triumph permitted to the Cynic (against ' Lycinus ' too) in the dialogue called after him ? In one of his own introductory lectures he compares his pieces aptly enough to the bacchante's thyrsus with its steel point concealed.

With his questions and his irony and his inconsistencies, it is no wonder that Lucian is accused of being purely negative and destructive. But we need not think he is disposed of in that way, any more than our old-fashioned literary education is disposed of when it has been pointed out that it does not equip its *alumni* with knowledge of electricity or of a commercially

useful modern language; it may have equipped them with something less paying, but more worth paying for. Lucian, it is certain, will supply no one with a religion or a philosophy; but it may be doubted whether any writer will supply more fully both example and precept in favour of doing one's thinking for oneself; and it may be doubted also whether any other intellectual lesson is more necessary. He is *nullius addictus iurare in verba magistri*, if ever man was; he is individualist to the core. No religion or philosophy, he seems to say, will save you; the thing is to think for yourself, and be a man of sense. 'It was but small consolation,' says *Menippus*, 'to reflect that I was in numerous and wise and eminently sensible company, if I was a fool still, all astray in my quest for truth.' *Vox populi* is no *vox dei* for him; he is quite proof against majorities; *Athanasius contra mundum* is more to his taste. '"What is this I hear?" asked Arignotus, scowling upon me; "you deny the existence of the supernatural, when there is scarcely a man who has not seen some evidence of it?" "Therein lies my exculpation," I replied; "I do not believe in the supernatural, because, unlike the rest of mankind, I do not see it; if I saw, I should doubtless believe, just as you all do."' That British schoolboys should have been brought up for centuries on Ovid, and Lucian have been tabooed, is, in view of their comparative efficacy in stimulating thought, an interesting example of *habent sua fata libelli*.

It need not be denied that there is in him a certain lack of feeling, not surprising in one of his analytic temper, but not agreeable either. He is a hard bright intelligence, with no bowels; he applies the knife without the least compunction—indeed with something of savage enjoyment. The veil is relentlessly torn from family affection in the *Mourning*. *Solon* in the *Charon* pursues his victory so far as to make us pity instead of scorning *Croesus*. *Menippus* and his kind, in the shades, do

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the gods extremely, even comically, human, that Plato showed him an example of prose dialogue, that Aristophanes inspired his constructive fancy, that Menippus provided him with some ideas, how far developed on the same lines we cannot now tell, that Menander's comedies and Herodas's mimes contributed to the absolute naturalness of his conversation. If any, or almost any, of these had never existed, Lucian would have been more or less different from what he is. His originality is not in the least affected by that; we may resolve him theoretically into his elements; but he too had the gift, that out of three sounds he framed, not a fourth sound, but a star. The question of his originality is no more important—indeed much less so—than that of Sterne's.

When we pass to purely literary matters, the first thing to be remarked upon is the linguistic miracle presented to us. It is useless to dwell upon it in detail, since this is an introduction not to Lucian, but to a translation of Lucian; it exists, none the less. A Syrian writes in Greek, and not in the Greek of his own time, but in that of five or six centuries before, and he does it, if not with absolute correctness, yet with the easy mastery that we expect only from one in a million of those who write in their mother tongue, and takes his place as an immortal classic. The miracle may be repeated; an English-educated Hindu may produce masterpieces of Elizabethan English that will rank him with Bacon and Ben Jonson; but it will surprise us, when it does happen. That Lucian was
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their lashing of dead horses with a disagreeable gusto, which tempts us to raise a society for the prevention of cruelty to the Damned. A voyage through Lucian in search of pathos will yield as little result as one in search of interest in nature. There is a touch of it here and there (which has probably evaporated in translation) in the *Hermotimus*, the *Demonax*, and the *Demosthenes*; but that is all. He was perhaps not unconscious of all this himself. 'But what is your profession?' asks *Philosophy*. 'I profess hatred of imposture and pretension, lying and pride... However, I do not neglect the complementary branch, in which love takes the place of hate; it includes love of truth and beauty and simplicity, and all that is akin to love. *But the subjects for this branch of the profession are sadly few.*'

Before going on to his purely literary qualities, we may collect here a few detached remarks affecting rather his character than his skill as an artist. And first of his relations to philosophy. The statements in the *Menippus* and the *Icaromenippus*, as well as in *The Fisher* and *The double Indictment*, have all the air of autobiography (especially as they are in the nature of digressions), and give us to understand that he had spent much time and energy on philosophic study. He claims *Philosophy* as his mistress in *The Fisher*, and in a case where he is in fact judge as well as party, has no difficulty in getting his claim established. He is for ever reminding us that he loves philosophy and only satirizes the degenerate philosophers of his day. But it *will* occur to us after reading him through that he has dissembled his love, then, very well. There is not a passage from beginning to end of his works that indicates any real comprehension of any philosophic system. The external characteristics of the philosophers, the absurd stories current about them, and the popular misrepresentations of their doctrines—it is in these that philosophy consists for him. That he had read some of them there is no doubt; but one has an uneasy suspicion that he read

Plato because he liked his humour and his style, and did not trouble himself about anything further. Gibbon speaks of 'the philosophic maze of the writings of Plato, of which the dramatic is perhaps more interesting than the argumentative part.' That is quite a legitimate opinion, provided you do not undertake to judge philosophy in the light of it. The apparently serious rejection of geometrical truth in the *Hermotimus* may fairly suggest that Lucian was as unphilosophic as he was unmathematical. Twice, and perhaps twice only, does he express hearty admiration for a philosopher. Demonax is 'the best of all philosophers'; but then he admired him just because he was so little of a philosopher and so much a man of ordinary common sense. And Epicurus is 'the thinker who had grasped the nature of things and been in solitary possession of truth'; but then that is in the *Alexander*, and any stick was good enough to beat that dog with. The fact is, Lucian was much too well satisfied with his own judgement to think that he could possibly require guidance, and the commonplace test of results was enough to assure him that philosophy was worthless: 'It is no use having all theory at your fingers' ends, if you do not conform your conduct to the right.' There is a description in the *Pantomime* that is perhaps truer than it is meant to pass for. 'Lycinus' is called 'an educated man, and *in some sort* a student of philosophy.'

If he is not a philosopher, he is very much a moralist; it is because philosophy deals partly with morals that he thinks he cares for it. But here too his conclusions are of a very common-sense order. The Stoic notion that 'Virtue consists in being uncomfortable' strikes him as merely absurd; no asceticism for him; on the other hand, no lavish extravagance and *Persici apparatus*; a dinner of herbs with the righteous—that is, the cultivated Athenian—, a neat repast of Attic taste, is honestly his idea of good living; it is probable that he really did sacrifice both money and fame to live in Athens rather than in Rome,

according to his own ideal. That ideal is a very modest one; when *Menippus* took all the trouble to get down to Tiresias in Hades via Babylon, his reward was the information that 'the life of the ordinary man is the best and the most prudent choice.' So thought Lucian; and it is to be counted to him for righteousness that he decided to abandon 'the odious practices that his profession imposes on the advocate—deceit, falsehood, bluster, clamour, pushing,' for the quiet life of a literary man (especially as we should probably never have heard his name had he done otherwise). Not that the life was so quiet as it might have been. He could not keep his satire impersonal enough to avoid incurring enmities. He boasts in the *Peregrine* of the unfeeling way in which he commented on that enthusiast to his followers, and we may believe his assurance that his writings brought general dislike and danger upon him. His moralizing (of which we are happy to say there is a great deal) is based on Tiresias's pronouncement. Moralizing has a bad name; but than good moralizing there is, when one has reached a certain age perhaps, no better reading. Some of us like it even in our novels, feel more at home with Fielding and Thackeray for it, and regretfully confess ourselves unequal to the artistic aloofness of a Flaubert. Well, Lucian's moralizings are, for those who like such things, of the right quality; they are never dull, and the touch is extremely light. We may perhaps be pardoned for alluding to half a dozen conceptions that have a specially modern air about them. The use that Rome may serve as a school of resistance to temptation (*Nigrinus*, 19) recalls Milton's 'fugitive and cloistered virtue, unexercised and unbreathed, that never sallies out and seeks her adversary.' 'Old age is wisdom's youth, the day of her glorious flower' (*Heracles*, 8) might have stood as a text for Browning's *Rabbi ben Ezra*. The brands visible on the tyrant's soul, and the refusal of Lethe as a sufficient punishment (*Voyage to the lower World*, 24 and 28),

have their parallels in our new eschatology. The decision of *Zeus* that *Heraclitus* and *Democritus* are to be one lot—that laughter and tears will go together (*Sale of Creeds*, 13)—accords with our views of the emotional temperament. *Chiron* is impressive on the vanity of fruition (*Dialogues of the Dead*, 26). And the figuring of *Truth* as 'the shadowy creature with the indefinite complexion' (*The Fisher*, 16) is only one example of Lucian's felicity in allegory.

Another weak point, for which many people will have no more inclination to condemn him than for his moralizing, is his absolute indifference to the beauties of nature. Having already given him credit for regarding nothing that is human as beyond his province, it is our duty to record the corresponding limitation; of everything that was not human he was simply unconscious; with him it was not so much that the *proper* as that the *only* study of mankind is man. The apparent exceptions are not real ones. If he is interested in the gods, it is as the creatures of human folly that he takes them to be. If he writes a toy essay with much parade of close observation on the fly, it is to show how amusing human ingenuity can be on an unlikely subject. But it is worth notice that 'the first of the moderns,' though he shows himself in many descriptions of pictures quite awake to the beauty manufactured by man, has in no way anticipated the modern discovery that nature is beautiful. To readers who have had enough of the pathetic fallacy, and of the second-rate novelist's local colour, Lucian's tacit assumption that there is nothing but man is refreshing. That he was a close enough observer of human nature, any one can satisfy himself by glancing at the *Feast of Lapithae*, the *Dialogues of the Hetaerae*, some of the *Dialogues of the Gods*, and perhaps best of all, *The Liar*.

As it occurs to himself to repel the imputation of plagiarism in *A literary Prometheus*, the point must be briefly touched upon. There is no doubt that Homer preceded him in making

the gods extremely, even comically, human, that Plato showed him an example of prose dialogue, that Aristophanes inspired his constructive fancy, that Menippus provided him with some ideas, how far developed on the same lines we cannot now tell, that Menander's comedies and Herodas's mimes contributed to the absolute naturalness of his conversation. If any, or almost any, of these had never existed, Lucian would have been more or less different from what he is. His originality is not in the least affected by that; we may resolve him theoretically into his elements; but he too had the gift, that out of three sounds he framed, not a fourth sound, but a star. The question of his originality is no more important—indeed much less so—than that of Sterne's.

When we pass to purely literary matters, the first thing to be remarked upon is the linguistic miracle presented to us. It is useless to dwell upon it in detail, since this is an introduction not to Lucian, but to a translation of Lucian; it exists, none the less. A Syrian writes in Greek, and not in the Greek of his own time, but in that of five or six centuries before, and he does it, if not with absolute correctness, yet with the easy mastery that we expect only from one in a million of those who write in their mother tongue, and takes his place as an immortal classic. The miracle may be repeated; an English-educated Hindu may produce masterpieces of Elizabethan English that will rank him with Bacon and Ben Jonson; but it will surprise us, when it does happen. That Lucian was himself aware of the awful dangers besetting the writer who would revive an obsolete fashion of speech is shown in the *Lexiphanes*.

Some faults of style he undoubtedly has, of which a word or two should perhaps be said. The first is the general taint of rhetoric, which is sometimes positively intolerable, and is liable to spoil enjoyment even of the best pieces occa-

sionally. Were it not that 'Rhetoric made a Greek of me,' we should wish heartily that he had never been a rhetorician. It is the practice of talking on unreal cases, doubtless habitual with him up to forty, that must be responsible for the self-satisfied fluency, the too great length, and the perverse ingenuity, that sometimes excite our impatience. Naturally, it is in the pieces of inferior subject or design that this taint is most perceptible; and it must be forgiven in consideration of the fact that without the toilsome study of rhetoric he would not have been the master of Greek that he was.

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Lucian's style, which must be laid at the door of rhetoric. On the other hand let it have part of the credit for a thing of vastly more importance, his choice of dialogue as a form when he took to letters. It is quite obvious that he was naturally a man of detached mind, with an inclination for looking at both sides of a question. This was no doubt strengthened by the common practice among professional rhetoricians of writing speeches on both sides of imaginary cases. The level-headedness produced by this combination of nature and training naturally led to the selection of dialogue. In one of the preliminary trials of *The double Indictment*, *Drink*, being one of the parties, and consciously incapable at the moment of doing herself justice, employs her opponent, *The Academy*, to plead for as well as against her. There are a good many pieces in which Lucian follows the same method. In *The Hall* the legal form is actually kept; in the *Peregrine* speeches are delivered by an admirer and a scorner of the hero; in *The Rhetorician's Vade mecum* half the piece is an imaginary statement of the writer's enemy; in the *Apology for* '*The dependent Scholar*' there is a long imaginary objection set up to be afterwards disposed of; the *Saturnalian Letters* are the cases of rich and poor put from opposite sides. None of these are dialogues; but they are all less perfect devices to secure the same object, the putting of the two views that the man of detached mind recognizes on every question. Not that justice is always the object; these devices, and dialogue still more, offer the further advantage of economy; no ideas need be wasted, if the subject is treated from more than one aspect. The choice of dialogue may be accounted for thus; it is true that it would not have availed much if the chooser had not possessed the nimble wit and the endless power of varying the formula which is so astonishing in Lucian; but that it was a matter of importance is proved at once by comparing the *Alexander* with *The Liar*, or *The dependent Scholar* with the

*Feast of Lapithae.* Lucian's non-dialogue pieces (with the exception of *The True History*) might have been written by other people; the dialogues are all his own.

About five-and-thirty of his pieces (or sets of pieces) are in dialogue, and perhaps the greatest proof of his artistic skill is that the form never palls; so great is the variety of treatment that no one of them is like another. The point may be worth dwelling on a little. The main differences between dialogues, apart from the particular writer's characteristics, are these: the persons may be two only, or more; they may be well or ill-matched; the proportions and relations between conversation and narrative vary; and the objects in view are not always the same. It is natural for a writer to fall into a groove with some or all of these, and produce an effect of sameness. Lucian, on the contrary, so rings the changes by permutations and combinations of them that each dialogue is approached with a delightful uncertainty of what form it may take. As to number of persons, it is a long step from the *Menippus* to the crowded *dramatis personae* of *The Fisher* or the *Zeus Tragoedus*, in the latter of which there are two independent sets, one overhearing and commenting upon the other. It is not much less, though of another kind, from *The Parasite*, where the interlocutor is merely a man of straw, to the *Hermotimus*, where he has life enough to give us ever fresh hopes of a change in fortune, or to the *Anacharsis*, where we are not quite sure, even when all is over, which has had the best. Then if we consider conversation and narrative, there are all kinds. *Nigrinus* has narrative in a setting of dialogue, *Demosthenes* vice versa, *The Liar* reported dialogue inside dialogue; *Icaromenippus* is almost a narrative, while *The Runaways* is almost a play. Lastly, the form serves in the *Toxaris* as a vehicle for stories, in the *Hermotimus* for real discussion, in *Menippus* as relief for narrative, in the *Portrait-study* for description, in *The Cock* to convey moralizing, in *The*

# THE
# WORKS OF LUCIAN

*double Indictment* autobiography, in the *Lexiphanes* satire, and in the short series it enshrines prose idylls.

These are considerations of a mechanical order, perhaps; it may be admitted that technical skill of this sort is only valuable in giving a proper chance to more essential gifts; but when those exist, it is of the highest value. And Lucian's versatility in technique is only a symbol of his versatile powers in general. He is equally at home in heaven and earth and hell, with philosophers and cobblers, telling a story, criticizing a book, describing a picture, elaborating an allegory, personifying an abstraction, parodying a poet or a historian, flattering an emperor's mistress, putting an audience into good temper with him and itself, unveiling an imposture, destroying a religion or a reputation, drawing a character. The last is perhaps the most disputable of the catalogue. How many of his personages are realities to us when we have read, and not mere labels for certain modes of thought or conduct? Well, characterization is not the first, but only the second thing with him; what is said matters rather more than who says it; he is more desirous that the argument should advance than that the person should reveal himself; nevertheless, nothing is ever said that is out of character; while nothing can be better of the kind than some of his professed personifications, his *Plutus* or his *Philosophy*, we do retain distinct impressions of at least an irresponsible *Zeus* and a decorously spiteful *Hera*, a well-meaning, incapable *Helius*, a bluff *Posidon*, a gallant *Prometheus*, a one-idea'd *Charon*; *Timon* is more than misanthropy, *Eucrates* than superstition, *Anacharsis* than intelligent curiosity, *Micyllus* than ignorant poverty, poor *Hermotimus* than blind faith, and Lucian than a scoffer.

# THE
# WORKS OF LUCIAN

# THE VISION

## A Chapter of Autobiography

When my childhood was over, and I had just left school, my father called a council to decide upon my profession. Most of his friends considered that the life of culture was very exacting in toil, time, and money: a life only for fortune's favourites; whereas our resources were quite narrow, and urgently called for relief. If I were to take up some ordinary handicraft, I should be making my own living straight off, instead of eating my father's meat at my age; and before long my earnings would be a welcome contribution.

2 So the next step was to select the most satisfactory of the handicrafts; it must be one quite easy to acquire, respectable, inexpensive as regards plant, and fairly profitable. Various suggestions were made, according to the taste and knowledge of the councillors; but my father turned to my mother's brother, supposed to be an excellent statuary, and said to him: 'With you here, it would be a sin to prefer any other craft; take the lad, regard him as your charge, teach him to handle, match, and grave your marble; he will do well enough; you know he has the ability.' This he had inferred from certain tricks I used to play with wax. When I got out of school, I used to scrape off the wax from my tablets and work it into cows, horses, or even men and women, and he thought I did it creditably; my masters used to cane me for it, but on this occasion it was taken as evidence of a natural faculty, and my modelling gave them good hopes of my picking up the art quickly.

As soon as it seemed convenient for me to begin, I was 3
handed over to my uncle, and by no means reluctantly;
I thought I should find it amusing, and be in a position to
impress my companions; they should see me chiselling gods
and making little images for myself and my favourites. The
usual first experience of beginners followed: my uncle gave
me a chisel, and told me to give a gentle touch to a plaque lying
on the bench: 'Well begun is half done,' said he, not very
originally. In my inexperience I brought down the tool too
hard, and the plaque broke; he flew into a rage, picked up a stick
which lay handy, and gave me an introduction to art which
might have been gentler and more encouraging; so I paid
my footing with tears.

I ran off, and reached home still howling and tearful, told 4
the story of the stick, and showed my bruises. I said a great
deal about his brutality, and added that it was all envy: he
was afraid of my being a better sculptor than he. My mother
was very angry, and abused her brother roundly; as for me,
I fell asleep that night with my eyes still wet, and sorrow
was with me till the morning.

So much of my tale is ridiculous and childish. What you 5
have now to hear, gentlemen, is not so contemptible, but deserves
an attentive hearing; in the words of Homer,

> To me in slumber wrapt a dream divine
> Ambrosial night conveyed,

a dream so vivid as to be indistinguishable from reality;
after all these years, I have still the figures of its persons in my
eyes, the vibration of their words in my ears; so clear it
all was.

Two women had hold of my hands, and were trying 6
vehemently and persistently to draw me each her way; I was
nearly pulled in two with their contention; now one would
prevail and all but get entire possession of me, now I would

fall to the other again. All the time they were exchanging loud protests: 'He is mine, and I mean to keep him;' 'Not yours at all, and it is no use your saying he is.' One of them seemed to be a working woman, masculine looking, with untidy hair, horny hands, and dress kilted up; she was all powdered with plaster, like my uncle when he was chipping marble. The other had a beautiful face, a comely figure, and neat attire. At last they invited me to decide which of them I would live with; the rough manly one made her speech first.

7 'Dear youth, I am Statuary—the art which you yesterday began to learn, and which has a natural and a family claim upon you. Your grandfather' (naming my mother's father) 'and both your uncles practised it, and it brought them credit. If you will turn a deaf ear to this person's foolish cajolery, and come and live with me, I promise you wholesome food and good strong muscles; you shall never fear envy, never leave your country and your people to go wandering abroad, and you shall be commended not for your words, but for your works.

8 'Let not a slovenly person or dirty clothes repel you; such were the conditions of that Phidias who produced the Zeus, of Polyclitus who created the Hera, of the much-lauded Myron, of the admired Praxiteles; and all these are worshipped with the Gods. If you should come to be counted among them, you will surely have fame enough for yourself through all the world, you will make your father the envy of all fathers, and bring your country to all men's notice.' This and more said Statuary, stumbling along in a strange jargon, stringing her arguments together in a very earnest manner, and quite intent on persuading me. But I can remember no more; the greater part of it has faded from my memory. When she stopped, the other's turn came.

9 'And I, child, am Culture, no stranger to you even now, though you have yet to make my closer acquaintance. The

advantages that the profession of a sculptor will bring with it you have just been told; they amount to no more than being a worker with your hands, your whole prospects in life limited to that; you will be obscure, poorly and illiberally paid, mean-spirited, of no account outside your doors; your influence will never help a friend, silence an enemy, nor impress your countrymen; you will be just a worker, one of the masses, cowering before the distinguished, truckling to the eloquent, living the life of a hare, a prey to your betters. You may turn out a Phidias or a Polyclitus, to be sure, and create a number of wonderful works; but even so, though your art will be generally commended, no sensible observer will be found to wish himself like you; whatever your real qualities, you will always rank as a common craftsman who makes his living with his hands.

'Be governed by me, on the other hand, and your first reward 10
shall be a view of the many wondrous deeds and doings of the men of old; you shall hear their words and know them all, what manner of men they were; and your soul, which is your very self, I will adorn with many fair adornments, with self-mastery and justice and reverence and mildness, with consideration and understanding and fortitude, with love of what is beautiful, and yearning for what is great; these things it is that are the true and pure ornaments of the soul. Nought shall escape you either of ancient wisdom or of present avail; nay, the future too, with me to aid, you shall foresee; in a word, I will instil into you, and that in no long time, all knowledge human and divine.

'This penniless son of who knows whom, contemplating but 11
now a vocation so ignoble, shall soon be admired and envied of all, with honour and praise and the fame of high achievement, respected by the high-born and the affluent, clothed as I am clothed' (and here she pointed to her own bright

raiment), 'held worthy of place and precedence; and if you leave your native land, you will be no unknown nameless wanderer; you shall wear my marks upon you, and every man beholding you shall touch his neighbour's arm and say, That is he.

12 'And if some great moment come to try your friends or country, then shall all look to you. And to your lightest word the many shall listen open-mouthed, and marvel, and count you happy in your eloquence, and your father in his son. 'Tis said that some from mortal men become immortal; and I will make it truth in you; for though you depart from life yourself, you shall keep touch with the learned and hold communion with the best. Consider the mighty Demosthenes, whose son he was, and whither I exalted him; consider Aeschines; how came a Philip to pay court to the cymbal-woman's brat? how but for my sake? Dame Statuary here had the breeding of Socrates himself; but no sooner could he discern the better part, than he deserted her and enlisted with me; since when, his name is on every tongue.

13 'You may dismiss all these great men, and with them all glorious deeds, majestic words, and seemly looks, all honour, repute, praise, precedence, power, and office, all lauded eloquence and envied wisdom; these you may put from you, to gird on a filthy apron and assume a servile guise; then will you handle crowbars and graving tools, mallets and chisels; you will be bowed over your work, with eyes and thoughts bent earthwards, abject as abject can be, with never a free and manly upward look or aspiration; all your care will be to proportion and fairly drape your works; to proportioning and adorning yourself you will give little heed enough, making yourself of less account than your marble.'

14 I waited not for her to bring her words to an end, but rose up and spoke my mind; I turned from that clumsy mechanic

woman, and went rejoicing to lady Culture, the more when I thought upon the stick, and all the blows my yesterday's apprenticeship had brought me. For a time the deserted one was wroth, with clenched fists and grinding teeth; but at last she stiffened, like another Niobe, into marble. A strange fate, but I must request your belief; dreams are great magicians, are they not?

Then the other looked upon me and spoke:—'For this 15
justice done me,' said she, 'you shall now be recompensed; come, mount this car'—and lo, one stood ready, drawn by winged steeds like Pegasus—, 'that you may learn what fair sights another choice would have cost you.' We mounted, she took the reins and drove, and I was carried aloft and beheld towns and nations and peoples from the East to the West; and methought I was sowing like Triptolemus; but the nature of the seed I cannot call to mind—only this, that men on earth when they saw it gave praise, and all whom I reached in my flight sent me on my way with blessings.

When she had presented these things to my eyes, and me 16
to my admirers, she brought me back, no more clad as when my flight began; I returned, methought, in glorious raiment. And finding my father where he stood waiting, she showed him my raiment, and the guise in which I came, and said a word to him upon the lot which they had come so near appointing for me. All this I saw when scarce out of my childhood; the confusion and terror of the stick, it may be, stamped it on my memory.

'Good gracious,' says some one, before I have done, 'what 17
a longwinded lawyer's vision!' 'This,' interrupts another, 'must be a winter dream, to judge by the length of night required; or perhaps it took three nights, like the making of Heracles. What has come over him, that he babbles such puerilities? memorable things indeed, a child in bed, and a very

ancient, worn-out dream! what stale frigid stuff! does he take us for interpreters of dreams?' Sir, I do not. When Xenophon related that vision of his which you all know, of his father's house on fire and the rest, was it just by way of a riddle? was it in deliberate ineptitude that he reproduced it? a likely thing in their desperate military situation, with the enemy surrounding them! no, the relation was to serve a useful purpose.

18 Similarly I have had an object in telling you my dream. It is that the young may be guided to the better way and set themselves to Culture, especially any among them who is recreant for fear of poverty, and minded to enter the wrong path, to the ruin of a nature not all ignoble. Such an one will be strengthened by my tale, I am well assured; in me he will find an apt example; let him only compare the boy of those days, who started in pursuit of the best and devoted himself to Culture regardless of immediate poverty, with the man who has now come back to you, as high in fame, to put it at the lowest, as any stonecutter of them all. H.

## A LITERARY PROMETHEUS

So you will have me a Prometheus? If your meaning is, my good sir, that my works, like his, are of clay, I accept the comparison and hail my prototype; potter me to your heart's content, though *my* clay is poor common stuff, trampled by common feet till it is little better than mud. But perhaps it is in exaggerated compliment to my ingenuity that you father my books upon the subtlest of the Titans; in that case I fear men will find a hidden meaning, and detect an Attic curl on your laudatory lips. Where do you find my ingenuity? in what consists the great subtlety, the Prometheanism, of my writings? enough for me if you have not found them sheer

earth, all unworthy of Caucasian clay-pits. How much better a claim to kinship with Prometheus have you gentlemen who win fame in the courts, engaged in real contests; *your* works have true life and breath, ay, and the warmth of fire. That is Promethean indeed, though with the difference, it may be, that you do not work in clay; your creations are oftenest of gold; we on the other hand who come before popular audiences 2
and offer mere lectures are exhibitors of imitations only. However, I have the general resemblance to Prometheus, as I said before—a resemblance which I share with the dollmakers—, that my modelling is in clay; but then there is no motion, as with him, not a sign of life; entertainment and pastime is the beginning and the end of my work. So I must look for light elsewhere; possibly the title is a sort of *lucus a non lucendo*, applied to me as to Cleon in the comedy:

Full well Prometheus-Cleon plans—the past.

Or again, the Athenians used to call Prometheuses the makers of jars and stoves and other, clay-workers, with playful reference to the material, and perhaps to the use of fire in baking the ware. If that is all your 'Prometheus' means, you have aimed your shaft well enough, and flavoured your jest with the right Attic tartness; my productions are as brittle as their pottery; fling a stone, and you may smash them all to pieces.

But here some one offers me a crumb of comfort: 'That 3
was not the likeness he found between you and Prometheus; he meant to commend your innovating originality: at a time when human beings did not exist, Prometheus conceived and fashioned them; he moulded and elaborated certain living things into agility and beauty; he was practically their creator, though Athene assisted by putting breath into the clay and bringing the models to life.' So says my some one, giving your remark its politest possible turn. Perhaps he has hit the true

meaning; not that I can rest content, however, with the mere credit of innovation, and the absence of any original to which my work can be referred; if it is not good as well as original, I assure you I shall be ashamed of it, bring down my foot and crush it out of existence; its novelty shall not avail (with me at least) to save its ugliness from annihilation. If I thought otherwise, I admit that a round dozen of vultures would be none too many for the liver of a dunce who could not see that ugliness was only aggravated by strangeness.

4 Ptolemy, son of Lagus, imported two novelties into Egypt; one was a pure black Bactrian camel, the other a piebald man, half absolutely black and half unusually white, the two colours evenly distributed; he invited the Egyptians to the theatre, and concluded a varied show with these two, expecting to bring down the house. The audience, however, was terrified by the camel and almost stampeded; still, it *was* decked all over with gold, had purple housings and a richly jewelled bridle, the spoil of Darius' or Cambyses' treasury, if not of Cyrus' own. As for the man, a few laughed at him, but most shrank as from a monster. Ptolemy realized that the show was a failure, and the Egyptians proof against mere novelty, preferring harmony and beauty. So he withdrew and ceased to prize them; the camel died forgotten, and the parti-coloured man became the reward of Thespis the fluteplayer for a successful after-dinner performance.

5 I am afraid my work is a camel in Egypt, and men's admiration limited to the bridle and purple housings; as to combinations, though the components may be of the most beautiful (as Comedy and Dialogue in the present case), that will not ensure a good effect, unless the mixture is harmonious and well-proportioned; it is possible that the resultant of two beauties may be bizarre. The readiest instance to hand is the centaur: not a lovely creature, you will admit, but a savage, if the paint-

ings of its drunken bouts and murders go for anything. Well, but on the other hand is it not possible for two such components to result in beauty, as the combination of wine and honey in superlative sweetness? That is my belief; but I am not prepared to maintain that *my* components have that property; I fear the mixture may only have obscured their separate beauties.

For one thing, there was no great original connexion or 6
friendship between Dialogue and Comedy; the former was a stay-at-home, spending his time in solitude, or at most taking a stroll with a few intimates; whereas Comedy put herself in the hands of Dionysus, haunted the theatre, frolicked in company, laughed and mocked and tripped it to the flute when she saw good; nay, she would mount her anapaests, as likely as not, and pelt the friends of Dialogue with nicknames—doctrinaires, airy metaphysicians, and the like. The thing she loved of all else was to chaff them and drench them in holiday impertinence, exhibit them treading on air and arguing with the clouds, or measuring the jump of a flea, as a type of their ethereal refinements. But Dialogue continued his deep speculations upon Nature and Virtue, till, as the musicians say, the interval between them was two full octaves, from the highest to the lowest note. This ill-assorted pair it is that we have dared to unite and harmonize—reluctant and ill-disposed for reconciliation.

And here comes in the apprehension of yet another Pro- 7
methean analogy: have I confounded male and female, and incurred the penalty? Or no—when will resemblances end?—have I, rather, cheated my hearers by serving them up bones wrapped in fat, comic laughter in philosophic solemnity? As for stealing—for Prometheus is the thief's patron too—I defy you there; that is the one fault you cannot find with me: from whom should I have stolen? if any one has dealt before

me in such forced unions and hybrids, I have never made his acquaintance. But after all, what am I to do? I have made my bed, and I must lie in it; Epimetheus may change his mind, but Prometheus, never. H.

## NIGRINUS

[Lucian to Nigrinus. Health.

There is a proverb about carrying 'owls to Athens'—an absurd undertaking, considering the excellent supply already on the spot. Had it been my intention, in presenting Nigrinus with a volume of my composition, to indulge him of all people with a display of literary skill, I should indeed have been an arrant 'owl-fancier in Athens.' As however my object is merely to communicate to you my present sentiments, and the profound impression produced upon me by your eloquence, I may fairly plead Not Guilty, even to the charge of Thucydides, that 'Men are bold from ignorance, where mature consideration would render them cautious.' For I need not say that devotion to my subject is partly responsible for my present hardihood; it is not *all* the work of ignorance. Farewell.]

### NIGRINUS

A Dialogue

*Lucian. A Friend*

*Fr.* What a haughty and dignified Lucian returns to us from his journey! He will not vouchsafe us a glance; he stands aloof, and will hold no further communion with us. Altogether a supercilious Lucian! The change is sudden. Might one inquire the cause of this altered demeanour?

*Luc.* 'Tis the work of Fortune.

*Fr.* Of Fortune!

*Luc.* As an incidental result of my journey, you see in me a happy man; 'thrice-blest,' as the tragedians have it.

*Fr.* Dear me. What, in this short time?

*Luc.* Even so.

*Fr.* But what does it all mean? What is the secret of your elation? I decline to rejoice with you in this abridged fashion; I must have details. Tell me all about it.

*Luc.* What should you think, if I told you that I had exchanged servitude for freedom; poverty for true wealth; folly and presumption for good sense?

*Fr.* Extraordinary! But I am not quite clear of your mean- 2
ing yet.

*Luc.* Why, I went off to Rome to see an oculist—my eyes had been getting worse—

*Fr.* Yes, I know about that. I have been hoping that you would light on a good man.

*Luc.* Well, I got up early one morning with the intention of paying a long-deferred visit to Nigrinus, the Platonic philosopher. On reaching his house, I knocked, and was duly announced and admitted to his presence. I found him with a book in his hand, surrounded by various statues of the ancient philosophers. Before him lay a tablet, with geometrical figures described on it, and a globe of reeds, designed apparently to represent the universe. He greeted me cordially, and asked 3
after my welfare. I satisfied his inquiries, and demanded, in my turn, how he did, and whether he had decided on another trip to Greece. Once on that subject, he gave free expression to his sentiments; and, I assure you, 'twas a veritable feast of ambrosia to me. The spells of the Sirens (if ever there were Sirens), of the Pindaric 'Charmers,' of the Homeric lotus, are things to be forgotten, after his truly divine eloquence. Led 4
on by his theme, he spoke the praises of philosophy, and of the freedom which philosophy confers; and expressed his contempt

for the vulgar error which sets a value upon wealth and renown and dominion and power, upon gold and purple, and all that dazzles the eyes of the world,—and once attracted my own! I listened with rapt attention, and with a swelling heart. At the time, I knew not what had come over me; my feelings were indescribable. My dearest idols, riches and renown, lay shattered; one moment I was ready to shed bitter tears over the disillusionment, the next, I could have laughed for scorn of these very things, and was exulting in my escape from the murky atmosphere of my past life into the brightness of the upper air. The result was curious: I forgot all about my ophthalmic troubles, in the gradual improvement of my spiritual vision; for till that day I had grovelled in spiritual blindness.
5 Little by little I came into the condition with which you were twitting me just now. Nigrinus's words have raised in me a joyous exaltation of spirit which precludes every meaner thought. Philosophy seems to have produced the same effect on me as wine is said to have produced on the Indians the first time they drank it. The mere taste of such potent liquor threw them into a state of absolute frenzy, the intoxicating power of the wine being doubled in men so warm-blooded by nature. This is my case. I go about like one possessed; I am drunk with the words of wisdom.

6 *Fr.* This is not drunkenness, but sobriety and temperance. But I should like to hear what Nigrinus actually said, if that may be. It is only right that you should take that trouble for me; I am your friend, and share your interests.

*Luc.* Enough! You urge a willing steed. I was about to bespeak your attention. You must be my witness to the world, that there is reason in my madness. Indeed, apart from this, the work of recollection is a pleasure, and has become a constant practice with me; twice, thrice in a day I repeat over his
7 words, though there is none to hear. A lover, in the absence

of his mistress, remembers some word, some act of hers, dwells on it, and beguiles hours of sickness with her feigned presence. Sometimes he thinks he is face to face with her; words, heard long since, come again from her lips; he rejoices; his soul cleaves to the memory of the past, and has no time for present vexations. It is so with me. Philosophy is far away, but I have heard a philosopher's words. I piece them together, and revolve them in my heart, and am comforted. Nigrinus is the beacon-fire on which, far out in mid-ocean, in the darkness of night, I fix my gaze; I fancy him present with me in all my doings; I hear ever the same words. At times, in moments of concentration, I see his very face, his voice rings in my ears. Of him it may truly be said, as of Pericles,

In every heart he left his sting.

*Fr.* Stay, gentle enthusiast. Take a good breath, and start again; I am waiting to hear what Nigrinus said. You beat 8
about the bush in a manner truly exasperating.

*Luc.* True, I must make a start, as you say. And yet . . . Tell me, did you never see a tragedy (nay, the comedies fare no better) murdered by bad acting, and the culprits finally hissed off the stage for their pains? As often as not the play is a perfectly good one, and has scored a success.

*Fr.* I know the sort of thing; and what about it?

*Luc.* I am afraid that before I have done you will find that I make as sad work of it as they do,—jumbling things together pell-mell, spoiling the whole point sometimes by inadequate expression; and you will end by damning the play instead of the actor. I could put up with my own share of the disgrace; but it would vex me indeed, that my subject should be involved in my downfall; I cannot have *it* discredited for my shortcomings. Remember, then: whatever the imperfections in 9
my speech, the author is not to be called to account; he sits

far aloof from the stage, and knows nothing of what is going forward. The memory of the actor is all that you are invited to criticize; I am neither more nor less than the 'Messenger' in a tragedy. At each flaw in the argument, be this your first thought, that the author probably said something quite different, and much more to the point;—and then you may hiss me off if you will.

10 *Fr.* Bless me; here is quite a professional exordium! You are about to add, I think, that 'your consultation with your client has been but brief'; that you 'come into court imperfectly instructed'; that 'it were to be desired that your client were here to plead his own cause; as it is, you are reduced to such a meagre and inadequate statement of the case, as memory will supply.' Am I right? Well then, spare yourself the trouble, as far as I am concerned. Imagine all these preliminaries settled. I stand prepared to applaud: but if you keep me waiting, I shall harbour resentment all through the case, and hiss you accordingly.

11 *Luc.* I should, indeed, have been glad to avail myself of the arguments you mention, and of others too. I might have said, that mine would be no set speech, no orderly statement such as that I heard; that is wholly beyond me. Nor can I speak in the person of Nigrinus. There again I should be like a bad actor, taking the part of Agamemnon, or Creon, or Heracles' self; he is arrayed in cloth of gold, and looks very formidable, and his mouth opens tremendously wide; and what comes out of it? A little, shrill, womanish pipe of a voice that would disgrace Polyxena or Hecuba! I for my part have no intention of exposing myself in a mask several sizes too large for me, or of wearing a robe to which I cannot do credit. Rather than play the hero's part, and involve him in my discomfiture, I will speak in my own person.

12 *Fr.* Will the man never have done with his masks and his stages?

*Luc.* Nay, that is all. And now to my subject. Nigrinus's first words were in praise of Greece, and in particular of the Athenians. They are brought up, he said, to poverty and to philosophy. The endeavours, whether of foreigners or of their own countrymen, to introduce luxury into their midst, find no favour with them. When a man comes among them with this view, they quietly set about to correct his tendency, and by gentle degrees to bring him to a better course of life. He 13
mentioned the case of a wealthy man who arrived at Athens in all the vulgar pomp of retinue and gold and gorgeous raiment, expecting that every eye would be turned upon him in envy of his lot; instead of which, they heartily pitied the poor worm, and proceeded to take his education in hand. Not an ill-natured word, not an attempt at direct interference: it was a free city; he was at liberty to live in it as he thought fit. But when he made a public nuisance of himself in the baths or gymnasiums, crowding in with his attendants, and taking up all the room, some one would whisper, in a sly aside, as if the words were not meant to reach his ears: 'He is afraid he will never come out from here alive; yet all is peace; there is no need of such an army.' The remark would be overheard, and would have its educational effect. They soon eased him of his embroidery and purple, by playful allusions to flower and colour. 'Spring is early.'—'How did that peacock get here?'—'His mother must have lent him that shawl,'—and so on. The same with the rest, his rings, his elaborate coiffure, and his table excesses. Little by little he came to his senses, and left Athens very much the better for the public education he had received.

Nor do they scruple to confess their poverty. He mentioned 14
a sentence which he heard pronounced unanimously by the assembled people at the Panathenaic festival. A citizen had been arrested and brought before the Steward for making his appearance in coloured clothes. The onlookers felt for him,

and took his part; and when the herald declared that he had violated the law by attending the festival in that attire, they all exclaimed with one voice, as if they had been in consultation, 'that he must be pardoned for wearing those clothes, as he had no others.'

He further commended the Athenian liberty, and unpretentious style of living; the peace and learned leisure which they so abundantly enjoy. To dwell among such men, he declared, is to dwell with philosophy; a single-hearted man, who has been taught to despise wealth, may here preserve a pure morality; no life could be more in harmony with the determined pursuit
15 of all that is truly beautiful. But the man over whom gold has cast its spell, who is in love with riches, and measures happiness by purple raiment and dominion, who, living his life among flatterers and slaves, knows not the sweets of freedom, the blessings of candour, the beauty of truth; he who has given up his soul to Pleasure, and will serve no other mistress, whose heart is set on gluttony and wine and women, on whose tongue are deceit and hypocrisy; he again whose ears must be tickled with lascivious songs, and the voluptuous notes of flute and lyre;—let all such (he cried) dwell here in Rome; the life will suit
16 them. Our streets and market-places are filled with the things they love best. They may take in pleasure through every aperture, through eye and ear, nostril and palate; nor are the claims of Aphrodite forgotten. The turbid stream surges everlastingly through our streets; avarice, perjury, adultery,—all tastes are represented. Under that rush of waters, modesty, virtue, uprightness, are torn from the soul; and in their stead grows the tree of perpetual thirst, whose flowers are many strange desires.

Such was Rome; such were the blessings she taught men to
17 enjoy. 'As for me,' he continued, 'on returning from my first voyage to Greece, I stopped short a little way from the city,

and called myself to account, in the words of Homer, for my return.

Ah, wretch! and leav'st thou then the light of day
—the joyous freedom of Greece,
And wouldst behold—

the turmoil of Rome? slander and insolence and gluttony, flatterers and false friends, legacy-hunters and murderers? And what wilt thou do here? thou canst not endure these things, neither canst thou escape them! Thus reasoning, I withdrew 18
myself out of range, as Zeus did Hector,

Far from the scene of slaughter, blood and strife,

and resolved henceforth to keep my house. I lead the life you see—a spiritless, womanish life, most men would account it—holding converse with Philosophy, with Plato, with Truth. From my high seat in this vast theatre, I look down on the scene beneath me; a scene calculated to afford much entertainment; calculated also to try a man's resolution to the utmost. For, to give evil its due, believe me, there is no better school 19
for virtue, no truer test of moral strength, than life in this same city of Rome. It is no easy thing, to withstand so many temptations, so many allurements and distractions of sight and sound. There is no help for it: like Odysseus, we must sail past them all; and there must be no binding of hands, no stopping of our ears with wax; that would be but sorry courage: our ears must hear, our hands must be free,—and our contempt must be genuine. Well may that man conceive an admiration of philo- 20
sophy, who is a spectator of so much folly; well may he despise the gifts of Fortune, who views this stage, and its multitudinous actors. The slave grows to be master, the rich man is poor, the pauper becomes a prince, a king; and one is His Majesty's friend, and another is his enemy, and a third he banishes. And here is the strangest thing of all: the affairs of mankind are

confessedly the playthings of Fortune, they have no pretence to security; yet, with instances of this daily before their eyes, men will reach after wealth and power;—not one of them but carries his load of hopes unrealized.

21 'But I said that there was entertainment also to be derived from the scene; and I will maintain it. Our rich men are an entertainment in themselves, with their purple and their rings always in evidence, and their thousand vulgarities. The latest development is the *salutation by proxy*[1]; they favour us with a glance, and that must be happiness enough. By the more ambitious spirits, an obeisance is expected; this is not performed at a distance, after the Persian fashion—you go right up, and make a profound bow, testifying with the angle of your body to the self-abasement of your soul; you then kiss his hand or breast—and happy and enviable is he who may do so much! And there stands the great man, protracting the illusion as long as may be. (I heartily acquiesce, by the way, in the churlish sentence which excludes us from a nearer acquaintance with their *lips*.)

22 'But if these men are amusing, their courtiers and flatterers are doubly so. They rise in the small hours of the night, to go their round of the city, to have doors slammed in their faces by slaves, to swallow as best they may the compliments of "Dog," "Toadeater," and the like. And the guerdon of their painful circumambulations? A vulgarly magnificent dinner, the source of many woes! They eat too much, they drink more than they want, they talk more than they should; and then they go away, angry and disappointed, grumbling at their fare, and protesting against the scant courtesy shown them by their insolent patron. You may see them vomiting in every alley, squabbling at every brothel. The daylight most of them spend in bed, furnishing employment for the doctors. Most of them, I say; for with

[1] The *spoken* salutation being performed by a servant.

some it has come to this, that they actually have no time to be ill. My own opinion is that, of the two parties, the toadies 23
are more to blame, and have only themselves to thank for their patron's insolence. What can they expect him to think, after their commendations of his wealth, their panegyrics on money, their early attendance at his doors, their servile salutations? If by common consent they would abstain, were it only for a few days, from this voluntary servitude, the tables must surely be turned, and the rich come to the doors of the paupers, imploring them not to leave such blessedness as theirs without a witness, their fine houses and elegant furniture lying idle for want of some one to use them. Not wealth, but the envy that waits on wealth, is the object of their desire. The truth is, gold and ivory and noble mansions are of little avail to their owner, if there is no one to admire them. If we would break the power of the rich, and bring down their pretensions, we must raise up within their borders a stronghold of Indifference. As it is, their vanity is fostered by the court that is paid to them. 24
In ordinary men, who have no pretence to education, this conduct, no doubt, is less to be blamed. But that men who call themselves philosophers should actually outdo the rest in degradation,—this, indeed, is the climax. Imagine my feelings, when I see a brother philosopher, an old man, perhaps, mingling in the herd of sycophants; dancing attendance on some great man; adapting himself to the conversational level of a possible host! One thing, indeed, serves to distinguish him from his company, and to accentuate his disgrace;—he wears the garb of philosophy. It is much to be regretted that actors of uniform excellence in other respects will not dress conformably to their part. For in the achievements of the 25
table, what toadeater besides can be compared with them? There is an artlessness in their manner of stuffing themselves, a frankness in their tippling, which defy competition; they

sponge with more spirit than other men, and sit on with greater persistency. It is not an uncommon thing for the more courtly sages to oblige the company with a song.'

All this he treated as a jest. But he had much to say on the subject of those paid philosophers, who hawk about virtue like any other marketable commodity. 'Hucksters' and 'petty traders' were his words for them. A man who proposes to teach the contempt of wealth, should begin (he maintained) by
26 showing a soul above fees. And certainly he has always acted on this principle himself. He is not content with giving his services gratis to all comers, but lends a helping hand to all who are in difficulties, and shows an absolute disregard for riches. So far is he from grasping at other men's goods, that he could anticipate without concern the deterioration of his own property. He possessed an estate at no great distance from the city, on which for many years he had never even set foot. Nay, he disclaimed all right of property in it; meaning, I suppose, that we have no natural claim to such things; law, and the rights of inheritance, give us the use of them for an indefinite period, and for that time we are styled 'owners'; presently our term lapses, and another succeeds to the enjoyment of a name.

There are other points in which he sets an admirable example to the serious followers of philosophy: his frugal life, his systematic habits of bodily exercise, his modest bearing, his simplicity of dress, but above all, gentle manners and a con-
27 stant mind. He urges his followers not to postpone the pursuit of good, as so many do, who allow themselves a period of grace till the next great festival, after which they propose to eschew deceit and lead a righteous life; there must be no shilly-shallying, when virtue is the goal for which we start. On the other hand, there are philosophers whose idea of inculcating virtue in their youthful disciples is to subject them to various tests of physical endurance; whose favourite prescription is the

strait waistcoat, varied with flagellations, or the enlightened process of scarification. Of these Nigrinus evidently had no 28
opinion. According to him, our first care should be to inure the *soul* to pain and hardship; he who aspired to educate men aright must reckon with soul as well as body, with the age of his pupils, and with their previous training; he would then escape the palpable blunder of overtasking them. Many a one (he affirmed) had succumbed under the unreasonable strain put upon him; and I met with an instance myself, of a man who had tasted the hardships of those schools, but no sooner heard the words of true wisdom, than he fled incontinently to Nigrinus, and was manifestly the better for the change.

Leaving the philosophers to themselves, he reverted to more 29
general subjects: the din and bustle of the city, the theatres, the race-course, the statues of charioteers, the nomenclature of horses, the horse-talk in every side-street. The rage for horses has become a positive epidemic; many persons are infected with it whom one would have credited with more sense.

Then the scene changed to the pomp and circumstance 30
attendant upon funerals and testamentary dispositions. 'Only once in his life' (he observed) 'does your thoroughbred Roman say what he means; and then,' meaning, in his will, 'it comes too late for him to enjoy the credit of it.' I could not help laughing when he told me how they thought it necessary to carry their follies with them to the grave, and to leave the record of their inanity behind them in black and white; some stipulating that their clothes or other treasures should be burnt with them, others that their graves should be watched by particular servants, or their monuments crowned with flowers;—sapient end to a life of sapience! 'Of their doings in this world,' said 31
he, 'you may form some idea from their injunctions with reference to the next. These are they who will pay a long price for an entrée; whose floors are sprinkled with wine and saffron and

spices; who in midwinter smother themselves in roses, ay, for roses are scarce, and out of season, and altogether desirable; but let a thing come in its due course, and oh, 'tis vile, 'tis contemptible. These are they whose drink is of costly essences.' He had no mercy on them here. 'Very bunglers in sensuality, who know not her laws, and confound her ordinances, flinging down their souls to be trampled beneath the heels of luxury! As the play has it, Door or window, all is one to
32 them. Such pleasures are rank solecism.' One observation of his in the same spirit fairly caps the famous censure of Momus. Momus found fault with the divine artificer for not putting his bull's horns in front of the eyes. Similarly, Nigrinus complained that when these men crown themselves in their banquets, they put the garlands in the wrong place; if they are so fond of the smell of violets and roses, they should tie on their garlands as close as may be under their nostrils; they could then snuff up the smell to their hearts' content.

33 Proceeding to the gentlemen who make such a serious work of their dinner, he was exceedingly merry over their painful elaborations of sauce and seasoning. 'Here again,' he cried, 'these men are sore put to it, to procure the most fleeting of enjoyments. Grant them four inches of palate apiece—'tis the utmost we can allow any man—and I will prove to you that they have four inches of gratification for their trouble. Thus: there is no satisfaction to be got out of the costliest viands before consumption; and after it a full stomach is none the better for the price it has cost to fill it. *Ergo*, the money is paid for the pleasure snatched *in transitu*. But what are we to expect? These men are too grossly ignorant to discern those truer pleasures with which Philosophy rewards our resolute endeavours.'

34 The Baths proved a fertile topic, what with the insolence of the masters and the jostlings of their men;—'they will not

stand without the support of a slave; it is much that they retain enough vitality to get away on their own legs at all.' One practice which obtains in the streets and Baths of Rome seemed to arouse his particular resentment. Slaves have to walk on ahead of their masters, and call out to them to 'look to their feet,' whenever there is a hole or a lump in their way; it has come to this, that men must be *reminded that they are walking.* 'It is too much,' he cried; 'these men can get through their dinner with the help of their own teeth and fingers; they can hear with their own ears: yet they must have other men's eyes to see for them! They are in possession of all their faculties: yet they are content to be spoken to in language which should only be addressed to poor maimed wretches! And this goes on in broad daylight, in our public places; and among the sufferers are men who are responsible for the welfare of cities!'

This he said, and much more to the same effect. At length 35
he was silent. All the time I had listened in awestruck attention, dreading the moment when he should cease. And when it was all over, my condition was like that of the Phaeacians. For a long time I gazed upon him, spellbound; then I was seized with a violent attack of giddiness; I was bathed in perspiration, and when I attempted to speak, I broke down; my voice failed, my tongue stammered, and at last I was reduced to tears. Mine was no surface wound from a random shaft. The words had sunk deep into a vital part; had come with true aim, and cleft my soul asunder. For (if I may venture to philosophize on my own account) I conceive the case thus:—
A well-conditioned human soul is like a target of some soft 36
material. As life goes on, many archers take aim thereat; and every man's quiver is full of subtle and varied arguments, but not every man shoots aright. Some draw the bow too tight, and let fly with undue violence. These hit the true direction, but their shafts do not lodge in the mark; their impetus carries

them right through the soul, and they pass on their way, leaving only a gaping wound behind them. Others make the contrary mistake: their bows are too slack, and their shafts never reach their destination; as often as not their force is spent at half distance, and they drop to earth. Or if they reach the mark, they do but graze its surface; there can be no deep wound,
37 where the archer lacks strength. But a good marksman, a Nigrinus, begins with a careful examination of the mark, in case it should be particularly soft,—or again too hard; for there are marks which will take no impression from an arrow. Satisfied on this point, he dips his shaft, not in the poisons of Scythia or Crete, but in a certain ointment of his own, which is sweet in flavour and gentle in operation; then, without more ado, he lets fly. The shaft speeds with well-judged swiftness, cleaves the mark right through, and remains lodged in it; and the drug works its way through every part. Thus it is that men hear his words with mingled joy and grief; and this was my own case, while the drug was gently diffusing itself through my soul. Hence I was moved to apostrophize him in the words of Homer:

So aim; and thou shalt bring (to some) salvation.

For as it is not every man that is maddened by the sound of the Phrygian flute, but only those who are inspired of Cybele, and by those strains are recalled to their frenzy,—so too not every man who hears the words of the philosophers will go away possessed, and stricken at heart, but only those in whose nature is something akin to philosophy.

38 *Fr.* These are fearful and wonderful words; nay, they are divine. All that you said of ambrosia and lotus is true; I little knew how sumptuous had been your feast. I have listened to you with strange emotion, and now that you have ceased, I feel oppressed, nay, in your own language, 'sore stricken.' This

need not surprise you. A person who has been bitten by a mad dog not only goes mad himself, you know, but communicates his madness to any one whom he bites whilst he is in that state, so that the infection may be carried on by this means through a long succession of persons.

*Luc.* Ah, then you confess to a tenderness ?

*Fr.* I do ; and beg that you will think upon some medicine for both our wounded breasts.

*Luc.* We must take a hint from Telephus.

*Fr.* What is that ?

*Luc.* We want a hair of the dog that bit us. F.

## TRIAL IN THE COURT OF VOWELS

Archon, Aristarchus of Phalerum.
Seventh Pyanepsion.
Court of the Seven Vowels.
Action for assault with robbery.
Sigma *v.* Tau.
Plaintiff's case—that the words in -ττ- are wrongfully withheld from him.

Vowels of the jury.—For some time this Mr. Tau's trespasses 2 and encroachments on my property were of minor importance ; I made no claim for damages, and affected unconsciousness of what I heard ; my conciliatory temper both you and the other letters have reason to know. His covetousness and folly, however, have now so puffed him up, that he is no longer content with my habitual concessions, but insists on more ; I accordingly find myself compelled to get the matter settled by you who know both sides of it. The fact is, I am in bodily fear, owing to the crushing to which I am subjected. This ever-growing aggression will end by ousting me completely from

my own; I shall be almost dumb, lose my rank as a letter, and be degraded to a mere noise.

3 Justice requires then that not merely you, the jury in this case, but the other letters also, should be on your guard against such attempts. If any one who chooses is to be licensed to leave his own place and usurp that of others, with no objection on your part (whose concurrence is an indispensable condition of all writing), I fail to see how combinations are to have their ancient constitutional rights secured to them. But my first reliance is upon you, who will surely never be guilty of the negligence and indifference which permits injustice; and even if you decline the contest, I have no intention of sitting down under that injustice myself.

4 It is much to be regretted that the assaults of other letters were not repelled when they first began their lawless practices; then we should not be watching the still pending dispute between Lambda and Rho for possession of κεφαλαλγία or κεφαλαργία, κίσηλις or κίσηρις: Gamma would not have had to defend its rights over γνάφαλλα, constantly almost at blows with Kappa in the debatable land, and *per contra* it would itself have dropped its campaign against Lambda (if indeed it is more dignified than petty larceny) for converting μόλις to μόγις: in fact lawless confusion generally would have been nipped in the bud. And it is well to abide by the established order; such trespasses betray a revolutionary spirit.

5 Now our first legislators—Cadmus the islander, Palamedes, son of Nauplius, or Simonides, whom some authorities credit with the measure—were not satisfied with determining merely our order of precedence in the alphabet; they also had an eye to our individual qualities and faculties. You, Vowels of the jury, constitute the first Estate, because you can be uttered independently; the semi-vowels, requiring support before they can be distinctly heard, are the second; and the lowest Estate

they declared to consist of those nine which cannot be sounded at all by themselves. The vowels are accordingly the natural guardians of our laws.

But this—this Tau—I would give him a worse designation, but 6
that is a manifest impossibility; for without the assistance of two good presentable members of your Estate, Alpha and Upsilon, he would be a mere nonentity—he it is that has dared to outdo all injuries that I have ever known, expelling me from the nouns and verbs of my inheritance, and hunting me out of my conjunctions and prepositions, till his rapacity has become quite unbearable. I am now to trace proceedings from the beginning.

I was once staying at Cybelus, a pleasant little town, said to 7
be an Athenian colony; my travelling companion was the excellent Rho, best of neighbours. My host was a writer of comedies, called Lysimachus; he seems to have been a Boeotian by descent, though he represented himself as coming from the interior of Attica. It was while with him that I first detected Tau's depredations [1]. For some earlier occasional attempts (as when he took to *τετταράκοντα* for *τεσσαράκοντα*, *τήμερον* for *σήμερον*, with little pilferings of that sort) I had explained as a trick and peculiarity of pronunciation; I had tolerated the sound without letting it annoy me seriously.

But impunity emboldened him; *κασσίτερος* became *καττί-* 8
*τερος*, *κάσσυμα* and *πίσσα* shared its fate; and then he cast off all shame and assaulted *βασίλισσα*. I found myself losing the society in which I had been born and bred [1]; at such a time

[1] For the probably corrupt passage § 7 fin.—§ 8 init. I accept Dindorf's rearrangement as follows: *μέχρι μὲν γὰρ ὀλίγοις ἐπεχείρει, τετταράκοντα λέγειν ἀξιοῦν, ἔτι δὲ τήμερον καὶ τὰ ὅμοια ἐπισπώμενον, συνήθειαν ᾤμην ἴδια ταυτὶ λέγειν, καὶ οἰστὸν ἦν μοι τὸ ἄκουσμα καὶ οὐ πάνυ τι ἐδακνόμην ἐπ' αὐτοῖς. 8. ὁπότε δ' ἐκ τούτων ἀρξάμενον ἐτόλμησε καττίτερον εἰπεῖν καὶ κάττυμα καὶ πίτταν, εἶτα ἀπερυθριάσαν καὶ βασίλιτταν ὀνομάζειν, ἀποστεροῦν με τῶν συγγεγενημένων μοι καὶ συντεθραμμένων γραμμάτων, οὐ μετρίως ἐπὶ τούτοις ἀγανακτῶ.*

equanimity is out of place; I am tortured with apprehension; how long will it be before σῦκα is τῦκα? Bear with me, I beseech you; I despair and have none to help me; do I not well to be angry? It is no petty everyday peril, this threatened separation from my long-tried familiars. My κίσσα, my talking bird that nestled in my breast, he has torn away and named anew; my φάσσα, my νῆσσαι, my κόσσυφοι—all gone; and I had Aristarchus's own word that they were mine; half my μέλισσαι he has lured to strange hives; Attica itself he has invaded, and wrongfully annexed its Hymettus (as he calls it); and you and the rest looked on at the seizure.

9 But why dwell on such trifles? I am driven from all Thessaly (Thettaly, forsooth!), θάλασσα is now *mare clausum* to me; he will not leave me a poor garden-herb like σεύτλιον, I have never a πάσσαλος to hang myself upon. What a long-suffering letter I am myself, your own knowledge is witness enough. When Zeta stole my σμάραγδος, and robbed me of all Smyrna, I never took proceedings against him; Xi might break all συνθῆκαι, and appeal to Thucydides (who ought to know) as xympathizing with his xystem; I let them alone. My neighbour Rho I made no difficulty about pardoning as an invalid, when he transplanted my μυρσίναι into his garden, or, in a fit of the spleen, took liberties with my κόρση. So much for my temper.

10 Tau's, on the other hand, is naturally violent; its manifestations are not confined to me. In proof that he has not spared other letters, but assaulted Delta, Theta, Zeta, and almost the whole alphabet, I wish his various victims to be put in the box. Now, Vowels of the jury, mark the evidence of Delta:—'He robbed me of ἐνδελέχεια, which he claimed, quite illegally, as ἐντελέχεια.' Mark Theta beating his breast and plucking out his hair in grief for the loss of κολοκύνθη. And Zeta mourns for συρίζειν and σαλπίζειν—nay, *cannot* mourn, for

lack of his γρύζειν. What tolerance is possible, what penalty adequate, for this criminal letter's iniquities?]

But his wrongs are not even limited to us, his own species; 11
he has now extended his operations to mankind, as I shall show. He does not permit their tongues to work straight. (But that mention of mankind calls me back for a moment, reminding me how he turns γλῶσσα into γλῶττα, half robbing me of the tongue itself. Ay, you are a disease of the tongue in every sense, Tau.) But I return from that digression, to plead the cause of mankind and its wrongs. The prisoner's designs include the constraint, racking, and mutilation of their utterance. A man sees a beautiful thing, and wishes to describe it as καλόν, but in comes Tau, and forces the man to say ταλόν: *he* must have precedence everywhere, of course. Another man has something to say about a vine, and lo, before it is out, it is metamorphosed by this miserable creature into misery; he has changed κλῆμα to τλῆμα, with a suggestive hint of τλήμων. And, not content with middle-class victims, he aims at the Persian king himself, the one for whom land and sea are said to have made way and changed their nature: Cyrus comes out at his bidding as Tyrus.

Such are his verbal offences against man; his offences in deed 12
remain. Men weep, and bewail their lot, and curse Cadmus with many curses for introducing Tau into the family of letters; they say it was his body that tyrants took for a model, his shape that they imitated, when they set up the erections on which men are crucified. Σταυρός the vile engine is called, and it derives its vile name from him. Now, with all these crimes upon him, does he not deserve death, nay, many deaths? For my part I know none bad enough but that supplied by his own shape—that shape which he gave to the gibbet named σταυρός after him by men. H.

# TIMON THE MISANTHROPE

*Timon. Zeus. Hermes. Plutus. Poverty. Gnathonides. Philiades. Demeas. Thrasycles. Blepsias.*

*Tim.* O Zeus, thou arbiter of friendship, protector of the guest, preserver of fellowship, lord of the hearth, launcher of the lightning, avenger of oaths, compeller of clouds, utterer of thunder (and pray add any other epithets; those cracked poets have plenty ready, especially when they are in difficulties with their scansion; then it is that a string of your names saves the situation and fills up the metrical gaps), O Zeus, where is now your resplendent lightning, where your deep-toned thunder, where the glowing, white-hot, direful bolt? we know now 'tis all fudge and poetic moonshine—barring what value may attach to the rattle of the names. That renowned projectile of yours, which ranged so far and was so ready to your hand, has gone dead and cold, it seems; never a spark left in it to scorch iniquity.

2 If men are meditating perjury, a smouldering lamp-wick is as likely to frighten them off it as the omnipotent's levin-bolt; the brand you hold over them is one from which they see neither flame nor smoke can come; a little soot-grime is the worst that need be apprehended from a touch of it. No wonder if Salmoneus challenged you to a thundering-match; he was reasonable enough when he backed his artificial heat against so cool-tempered a Zeus. Of course he was; there are you in your opiate-trance, never hearing the perjurers nor casting a glance at criminals, your glazed eyes dull to all that happens, and your ears as deaf as a dotard's.

3 When you were young and keen, and your temper had some life in it, you used to bestir yourself against crime and violence; there were no armistices in those days; the thunderbolt was

always hard at it, the aegis quivering, the thunder rattling, the lightning engaged in a perpetual skirmish. Earth was shaken like a sieve, buried in now, bombarded with hail. It rained cats and dogs (if you will pardon my familiarity), and every shower was a waterspout. Why, in Deucalion's time, hey presto, everything was swamped, mankind went under, and just one little ark was saved, stranding on the top of Lycoreus and preserving a remnant of human seed for the generation of greater wickedness.

Mankind pays you the natural wages of your laziness; if any 4
one offers you a victim or a garland nowadays, it is only at Olympia as a perfunctory accompaniment of the games; he does it not because he thinks it is any good, but because he may as well keep up an old custom. It will not be long, most glorious of deities, before they serve you as you served Cronus, and depose you. I will not rehearse all the robberies of your temple—those are trifles; but they have laid hands on your person at Olympia, my lord High-Thunderer, and you had not the energy to wake the dogs or call in the neighbours; surely they might have come to the rescue and caught the fellows before they had finished packing up the swag. But there sat the bold Giant-slayer and Titan-conqueror letting them cut his hair, with a fifteen-foot thunderbolt in his hand all the time! My good sir, when is this careless indifference to cease? how long before you will punish such wickedness? Phaethon-falls and Deucalion-deluges—a good many of them will be required to suppress this swelling human insolence.

To leave generalities and illustrate from my own case—I have 5
raised any number of Athenians to high position, I have turned poor men into rich, I have assisted every one that was in want, nay, flung my wealth broadcast in the service of my friends, and now that profusion has brought me to beggary, they do not so much as know me; I cannot get a glance from the men

who once cringed and worshipped and hung upon my nod. If I meet one of them in the street, he passes me by as he might pass the tombstone of one long dead; it has fallen face upwards, loosened by time, but he wastes no moment deciphering it. Another will take the next turning when he sees me in the distance; I am a sight of ill omen, to be shunned by the man whose saviour and benefactor I had been not so long ago.

6 Thus in disgrace with fortune, I have betaken me to this corner of the earth, where I wear the smock-frock and dig for sixpence a day, with solitude and my spade to assist meditation. So much gain I reckon upon here—to be exempt from contemplating unmerited prosperity; no sight that so offends the eye as that. And now, Son of Cronus and Rhea, may I ask you to shake off that deep sound sleep of yours—why, Epimenides's was a mere nap to it—, put the bellows to your thunderbolt or warm it up in Etna, get it into a good blaze, and give a display of spirit, like a manly vigorous Zeus? or are we to believe the Cretans, who show your grave among their sights?

. . . . . .

7 *Zeus.* Hermes, who is that calling out from Attica? there, on the lower slopes of Hymettus—a grimy squalid fellow in a smock-frock; he is bending over a spade or something; but he has a tongue in his head, and is not afraid to use it. He must be a philosopher, to judge from his fluent blasphemy.

*Her.* What, father! have you forgotten Timon—son of Echecratides, of Collytus? many is the time he has feasted us on unexceptionable victims; the rich *parvenu* of the whole hecatombs, you know, who used to do us so well at the Diasia.

*Zeus.* Dear, dear, *quantum mutatus*! is this the admired, the rich, the popular? What has brought him to this pass? There he is in filth and misery, digging for hire, labouring at that ponderous spade.

8 *Her.* Why, if you like to put it so, it was kindness and genero-

sity and universal compassion that ruined him; but it would be nearer the truth to call him a fool and a simpleton and a blunderer; he did not realize that his protégés were carrion crows and wolves; vultures were feeding on his unfortunate liver, and he took them for friends and good comrades, showing a fine appetite just to please him. So they gnawed his bones perfectly clean, sucked out with great precision any marrow there might be in them, and went off, leaving him as dry as a tree whose roots have been severed; and now they do not know him or vouchsafe him a nod—no such fools—, nor ever think of showing him charity or repaying his gifts. That is how the spade and smock-frock are accounted for; he is ashamed to show his face in town; so he hires himself out to dig, and broods over his wrongs—the rich men he has made passing him contemptuously by, apparently quite unaware that his name is Timon.

*Zeus.* This is a case we must take up and see to. No wonder 9
he is down on his luck. We should be putting ourselves on the level of his despicable sycophants, if we forgot all the fat ox and goat thighs he has burnt on our altars; the savour of them is yet in my nostrils. But I have been so busy, there is such a din of perjury, assault, and burglary; I am so frightened of the temple-robbers—they swarm now, you cannot keep them out, nor take a nap with any safety; and, with one thing and another, it is an age since I had a look at Attica. I have hardly been there since philosophy and argument came into fashion; indeed, with their shouting-matches going on, prayers are quite inaudible. One must sit with one's ears plugged, if one does not want the drums of them cracked; such long vociferous rigmaroles about Incorporeal Things, or something they call Virtue! That is how we came to neglect this man—who really deserved better.

However, go to him now without wasting any more time, 10

Hermes, and take Plutus with you. Thesaurus is to accompany Plutus, and they are both to stay with Timon, and not leave him so lightly this time, even though the generous fellow does his best to find other hosts for them. As to those parasites, and the ingratitude they showed him, I will attend to them before long; they shall have their deserts as soon as I have got the thunderbolt in order again. Its two best spikes are broken and blunted; my zeal outran my discretion the other day when I took that shot at Anaxagoras the sophist; the Gods non-existent, indeed! that was what he was telling his disciples. However, I missed him (Pericles had held up his hand to shield him), and the bolt glanced off on to the Anaceum, set it on fire, and was itself nearly pulverized on the rock. But meanwhile it will be quite sufficient punishment for them to see Timon rolling in money.

11 *Her.* Nothing like lifting up your voice, making yourself a nuisance, and showing a bold front; it is equally effective whether you are pleading with juries or deities. Here is Timon developing from pauper to millionaire, just because his prayer was loud and free enough to startle Zeus; if he had dug quietly with his face to his work, he might have dug to all eternity, for any notice he would have got.

*Pl.* Well, Zeus, I am not going to him.

*Zeus.* Your reason, good Plutus; have I not told you to go?

12 *Pl.* Good God! why, he insulted me, threw me about, dismembered me—me, his old family friend—and practically pitchforked me out of the house; he could not have been in a greater hurry to be rid of me if I had been a live coal in his hand. What, go there again, to be transferred to toadies and flatterers and harlots? No, no, Zeus; send me to people who will appreciate the gift, take care of me, value and cherish me. Let these gulls consort with the poverty which they prefer to me; she will find them a smock-frock and a spade, and they can be thank-

ful for a miserable pittance of sixpence a day, these reckless squanderers of £1,000 presents.

*Zeus.* Ah, Timon will not treat you that way again. If his 13
loins are not of cast iron, his spade-work will have taught him a thing or two about your superiority to poverty. You are so particular, you know; now, you are finding fault with Timon for opening the door to you and letting you wander at your own sweet will, instead of keeping you in jealous seclusion. Yesterday it was another story: you were imprisoned by rich men under bolts and locks and seals, and never allowed a glimpse of sunlight. That was the burden of your complaint—you were stifled in deep darkness. We saw you pale and careworn, your fingers hooked with coin-counting, and heard how you would like to run away, if only you could get the chance. It was monstrous, then, that you should be kept in a bronze or iron chamber, like a Danae condemned to virginity, and brought up by those stern unscrupulous tutors, Interest, Debit and Credit.

They were perfectly ridiculous, you know, loving you to dis- 14
traction, but not daring to enjoy you when they might; you were in their power, yet they could not give the reins to their passion; they kept awake watching you with their eyes glued to bolt and seal; the enjoyment that satisfied them was not to enjoy you themselves, but to prevent others' enjoying you—true dogs in the manger. Yes, and then how absurd it was that they should scrape and hoard, and end by being jealous of their own selves! Ah, if they could but see that rascally slave—steward—trainer—sneaking in bent on carouse! little enough *he* troubles his head about the luckless unamiable owner at his nightly accounts by a dim little half-fed lamp. How, pray, do you reconcile your old strictures of this sort with your contrary denunciation of Timon?

*Pl.* Oh, if you consider the thing candidly, you will find both 15

attitudes reasonable. It is clear enough that Timon's utter negligence comes from slackness, and not from any consideration for me. As for the other sort, who keep me shut up in the obscurity of strong-boxes, intent on making me heavy and fat and unwieldy, never touching me themselves, and never letting me see the light, lest some one else should catch sight of me, I always thought of them as fools and tyrants; what harm had I done that they should let me rot in close confinement? and did not they know that in a little while they would pass away and have to resign me to some other lucky man?

16 No, give me neither these nor the off-hand gentry; my beau idéal is the man who steers a middle course, as far from complete abstention as from utter profusion. Consider, Zeus, by your own great name; suppose a man were to take a fair young wife, and then absolutely decline all jealous precautions, to the point of letting her wander where she would by day or night, keeping company with any one who had a mind to her—or put it a little stronger, and let him be procurer, janitor, pander, and advertiser of her charms in his own person—well, what sort of love is his? come, Zeus, you have a good deal of experience, you know what love is.

17 On the other hand, let a man make a suitable match for the express purpose of raising heirs, and then let him neither himself have anything to do with her ripe, yet modest, beauty, nor allow any other to set eyes on it, but shut her up in barren, fruitless virginity; let him say all the while that he is in love with her, and let his pallid hue, his wasting flesh and his sunken eyes confirm the statement;—is he a madman, or is he not? he should be raising a family and enjoying matrimony; but he lets this fair-faced lovely girl wither away; he might as well be bringing up a perpetual priestess of Demeter. And now you understand my feelings when one set of people kick me

about or waste me by the bucketful, and the others clap irons on me like a runaway convict.

*Zeus.* However, indignation is superfluous; both sets have 18
just what they deserve—one as hungry and thirsty and dry-mouthed as Tantalus, getting no further than gaping at the gold; and the other finding its food swept away from its very gullet, as the Harpies served Phineus. Come, be off with you; you will find Timon has much more sense nowadays.

*Pl.* Oh, of course! he will not do his best to let me run out of a leaky vessel before I have done running in! oh no, he will not be consumed with apprehensions of the inflow's gaining on the waste and flooding him! I shall be supplying a cask of the Danaids; no matter how fast I pour in, the thing will not hold water; every gallon will be out almost before it is in; the bore of the waste-pipe is so large, and never a plug.

*Zeus.* Well, if he does not stop the hole—if the leak is more 19
than temporary—you will run out in no time, and he can find his smock-frock and spade again in the dregs of the cask. Now go along, both of you, and make the man rich. And, Hermes, on your way back, remember to bring the Cyclopes with you from Etna; my thunderbolt wants the grindstone; and I have work for it as soon as it is sharp.

*Her.* Come along, Plutus. Hullo! limping? My good man, 20
I did not know you were lame as well as blind.

*Pl.* No, it is intermittent. As sure as Zeus sends me *to* any one, a sort of lethargy comes over me, my legs are like lead, and I can hardly get to my journey's end; my destined host is sometimes an old man before I reach him. As a parting guest, on the other hand, you may see me wing my way swifter than any dream. 'Are you ready?' and almost before 'Go' has sounded, up goes my name as winner; I have flashed round the course absolutely unseen sometimes.

*Her.* You are not quite keeping to the truth; I could name

you plenty of people who yesterday had not the price of a halter to hang themselves with, and to-day have developed into lavish men of fortune; they drive their pair of high-steppers, whereas a donkey would have been beyond their means before. They go about in purple raiment with jewelled fingers, hardly convinced yet that their wealth is not all a dream.

21 *Pl.* Ah, those are special cases, Hermes. I do not go on my own feet on those occasions, and it is not Zeus who sends me, but Pluto, who has his own ways of conferring wealth and making presents; Pluto and Plutus are not unconnected, you see. When I am to flit from one house to another, they lay me on parchment, seal me up carefully, make a parcel of me and take me round. The dead man lies in some dark corner, shrouded from the knees upward in an old sheet, with the cats fighting for possession of him, while those who have expectations wait for me in the public place, gaping as wide as young swallows that scream for their mother's return.

22 Then the seal is taken off, the string cut, the parchment opened, and my new owner's name made known. It is a relation, or a parasite, or perhaps a domestic minion, whose value lay in his vices and his smooth cheeks; he has continued to supply his master with all sorts of unnatural pleasures beyond the years which might excuse such service, and now the fine fellow is richly rewarded. But whoever it is, he snatches me up, parchment included, and is off with me in a flash; he used to be called Pyrrhias or Dromo or Tibius, but now he is Megacles, Megabyzus, or Protarchus; off he goes, leaving the disappointed ones staring at each other in very genuine mourning—over the fine fish which has jumped out of the landing-net after swallowing their good bait.

23 The fellow who *has* pounced on me has neither taste nor feeling; the sight of fetters still gives him a start; crack a whip in his neighbourhood, and his ears tingle; the treadmill

is an abode of awe to him. He is now insufferable—insults his new equals, and whips his old fellows to see what that side of the transaction feels like. He ends by finding a mistress, or taking to the turf, or being cajoled by parasites; these have only to swear he is handsomer than Nireus, nobler than Cecrops or Codrus, wiser than Odysseus, richer than a dozen Croesuses rolled into one; and so the poor wretch disperses in a moment what cost so many perjuries, robberies, and swindles to amass.

*Her.* A very fair picture. But when you go on your own 24
feet, how can a blind man like you find the way? Zeus sends you to people who he thinks deserve riches; but how do you distinguish them?

*Pl.* Do you suppose I do find them? not much. I should scarcely have passed Aristides by, and gone to Hipponicus, Callias, and any number of other Athenians whose merits could have been valued in copper.

*Her.* Well, but what do you do when he sends you?

*Pl.* I just wander up and down till I come across some one; the first comer takes me off home with him, and thanks—whom but the God of windfalls, yourself?

*Her.* So Zeus is in error, and you do *not* enrich deserving 25
persons according to his pleasure?

*Pl.* My dear fellow, how can he expect it? He knows I am blind, and he sends me groping about for a thing so hard to detect, and so nearly extinct this long time, that a Lynceus would have his work cut out spying for its dubious remains. So you see, as the good are few, and cities are crowded with multitudes of the bad, I am much more likely to come upon the latter in my rambles, and they keep me in their nets.

*Her.* But when you are leaving them, how do you find escape so easy? you do not know the way.

*Pl.* Ah, there is just one occasion which brings me quickness of eye and foot; and that is flight.

26 *Her.* Yet another question. You are not only blind (excuse my frankness), but pallid and decrepit; how comes it, then, that you have so many lovers? All men's looks are for you; if they get possession of you, they count themselves happy men; if they miss you, life is not worth living. Why, I have known not a few so sick for love of you that they have scaled some sky-pointing crag, and thence hurled themselves to unplumbed ocean depths[1], when they thought they were scorned by you, because you would not acknowledge their first salute. I am sure you know yourself well enough to confess that they must be lunatics, to rave about such charms as yours.

27 *Pl.* Why, you do not suppose they see me in my true shape, lame, blind, and so forth?

*Her.* How else, unless they are all as blind themselves?

*Pl.* They are not blind, my dear boy; but the ignorant misconceptions now so prevalent obscure their vision. And then I contribute; not to be an absolute fright when they see me, I put on a charming mask, all gilt and jewels, and dress myself up. They take the mask for my face, fall in love with its beauty, and are dying to possess it. If any one were to strip and show me to them naked, they would doubtless reproach themselves for their blindness in being captivated by such an ugly misshapen creature.

28 *Her.* How about fruition, then? When they are rich, and have put the mask on themselves, they are still deluded; if any one tries to take it off, they would sooner part with their heads than with it; and it is not likely they do not know by that time that the beauty is adventitious, now that they have an inside view.

*Pl.* There too I have powerful allies.

*Her.* Namely——?

*Pl.* When a man makes my acquaintance, and opens the door to let me in, there enter unseen by my side Arrogance, Folly,

[1] See *Apology for 'The Dependent Scholar,'* 10.

Vainglory, Effeminacy, Insolence, Deceit, and a goodly company more. These possess his soul; he begins to admire mean things, pursues what he should abhor, reveres me amid my bodyguard of the insinuating vices which I have begotten, and would consent to anything sooner than part with me.

*Her.* What a smooth, slippery, unstable, evasive fellow you 29
are, Plutus! there is no getting a firm hold of you; you wriggle through one's fingers somehow, like an eel or a snake. Poverty is so different—sticky, clinging, all over hooks; any one who comes near her is caught directly, and finds it no simple matter to get clear. But all this gossip has put business out of our heads.

*Pl.* Business? What business?

*Her.* We have forgotten to bring Thesaurus, and we cannot do without him.

*Pl.* Oh, never mind him. When I come up to see you, I 30
leave him on earth, with strict orders to stay indoors, and open to no one unless he hears my voice.

*Her.* Then we may make our way into Attica; hold on to my cloak till I find Timon's retreat.

*Pl.* It is just as well to keep touch; if you let me drop behind, I am as likely as not to be snapped up by Hyperbolus or Cleon. But what is that noise? it sounds like iron on stone.

*Her.* Ah, here is Timon close to us; what a steep stony little 31
plot he has got to dig! Good gracious, I see Poverty and Toil in attendance, Endurance, Wisdom, Courage, and Hunger's whole company in full force—much more efficient than your guards, Plutus.

*Pl.* Oh dear, let us make the best of our way home, Hermes. We shall never produce any impression on a man surrounded by such troops.

*Her.* Zeus thought otherwise; so no cowardice.

32 *Pov.* Slayer of Argus, whither away, you two hand in hand?

*Her.* Zeus has sent us to Timon here.

*Pov.* Now? What has Plutus to do with Timon now? I found him suffering under Luxury's treatment, put him in the charge of Wisdom and Toil (whom you see here), and made a good worthy man of him. Do you take me for such a contemptible helpless creature that you can rob me of my little all? have I perfected him in virtue, only to see Plutus take him, trust him to Insolence and Arrogance, make him as soft and limp and silly as before, and return him to me a worn-out rag again?

*Her.* It is Zeus's will.

33 *Pov.* I am off, then. Toil, Wisdom, and the rest of you, quick march! Well, he will realize his loss before long; he had a good helpmeet in me, and a true teacher; with me he was healthy in body and vigorous in spirit; he lived the life of a man, and could be independent, and see the thousand and one needless refinements in all their absurdity.

*Her.* There they go, Plutus; let us come to him.

34 *Tim.* Who are you, villains? What do you want here, interrupting a hired labourer? You shall have something to take with you, confound you all! These clods and stones shall provide you with a broken head or two.

*Her.* Stop, Timon, don't throw. We are not men; I am Hermes, and this is Plutus; Zeus has sent us in answer to your prayers. So knock off work, take your fortune, and much good may it do you!

*Tim.* I dare say you *are* Gods; that shall not save you. I hate every one, man or God; and as for this blind fellow, whoever he may be, I am going to give him one over the head with my spade.

*Pl.* For God's sake, Hermes, let us get out of this! the man is melancholy-mad, I believe; he will do me a mischief before I get off.

*Her.* Now don't be foolish, Timon; cease overdoing the ill- 35
tempered boor, hold out your hands, take your luck, and be a rich man again. Have Athens at your feet, and from your solitary eminence you can forget ingratitude.

*Tim.* I have no use for you; leave me in peace; my spade is riches enough for me; for the rest, I am perfectly happy if people will let me alone.

*Her.* My dear sir—so unsociable?

So stiff and stubborn a reply to Zeus?

A misanthrope you may well be, after the way men have treated you; but with the Gods so thoughtful for you, you need not be a misotheist.

*Tim.* Very well, Hermes; I am extremely obliged to you 36
and Zeus for your thoughtfulness—there; but I will not have Plutus.

*Her.* Why, pray?

*Tim.* He brought me countless troubles long ago—put me in the power of flatterers, set designing persons on me, stirred up ill-feeling, corrupted me with indulgence, exposed me to envy, and wound up with treacherously deserting me at a moment's notice. Then the excellent Poverty gave me a drilling in manly labour, conversed with me in all frankness and sincerity, rewarded my exertions with a sufficiency, and taught me to despise superfluities; all hopes of a livelihood were to depend on myself, and I was to know my true wealth, unassailable by parasites' flattery or informers' threats, hasty legislatures or decree-mongering legislators, and which even the tyrant's machinations cannot touch.

So, toil-hardened, working with a will at this bit of ground, 37
my eyes rid of city offences, I get bread enough and to spare out of my spade. Go your ways, then, Hermes, and take Plutus back to Zeus. I am quite content to let every man of them go hang.

*Her.* Oh, that would be a pity; they are not all hanging-ripe. Don't make a passionate child of yourself, but admit Plutus. Zeus's gifts are too good to be thrown away.

*Pl.* Will you condescend to argue with me, Timon? or does my voice provoke you?

*Tim.* Oh, talk away; but be brief; no rascally lawyer's 'opening the case.' I can put up with a few words from you, for Hermes' sake.

38 *Pl.* A speech of some length might seem to be needed, considering the number of your charges; however, just examine your imputations of injustice. It was I that gave you those great objects of desire—consideration, precedence, honours, and every delight; all eyes and tongues and attentions were yours—my gifts; and if flatterers abused you, I am not responsible for that. It is I who should rather complain; you prostituted me vilely to scoundrels, whose laudations and cajolery of you were only samples of their designs upon me. As to your saying that I wound up by betraying you, you have things topsy-turvy again; *I* may complain; you took every method to estrange me, and finally kicked me out neck and crop. That is why your revered Dame Poverty has supplied you with a smock-frock to replace your soft raiment. Why, I begged and prayed Zeus (and Hermes heard me) that I might be excused from revisiting a person who had been so unfriendly to me as you.

39 *Her.* But you see how he is changed, Plutus; you need not be afraid to live with him now. Just go on digging, Timon; and you, Plutus, put Thesaurus in position; he will come at your call.

*Tim.* I must obey, and be a rich man again, Hermes; what can one do, when Gods insist? But reflect what troubles you are bringing on my luckless head; I have had a blissful life of late, and now for no fault of my own I am to have my hands full of gold and care again.

40 *Her.* Hard, intolerable fate! yet endure for my sake, if only

that the flatterers may burst themselves with envy. And now for heaven, via Etna.

*Pl.* He is off, I suppose, from the beating of his wings. Now, you stay where you are, while I go and fetch Thesaurus to you; or rather, dig hard. Here, Gold! Thesaurus I say! answer Timon's summons and let him unearth you. Now, Timon, with a will; a deep stroke or two. I will leave you together.

*Tim.* Come, spade, show your mettle; stick to it; invite 41
Thesaurus to step up from his retreat.... O God of Wonders! O mystic priests! O lucky Hermes! whence this flood of gold? Sure, 'tis all a dream; methinks 'twill be ashes when I wake. And yet—coined gold, ruddy and heavy, a feast of delight!

O gold, the fairest gift to mortal eyes!

be it night, or be it day,

Thou dost outshine all else like living fire.

Come to me, my own, my beloved. I doubt the tale no longer; well might Zeus take the shape of gold; where is the maid that would not open her bosom to receive so fair a lover gliding through the roof?

Talk of Midas, Croesus, Delphic treasures! they were all 42
nothing to Timon and his wealth; why, the Persian King could not match it. My spade, my dearest smock-frock, you must hang, a votive offering to Pan. And now I will buy up this desert corner, and build a tiny castle for my treasure, big enough for me to live in all alone, and, when I am dead, to lie in. And be the rule and law of my remaining days to shun all men, be blind to all men, scorn all men. Friendship, hospitality, society, compassion—vain words all. To be moved by another's tears, to assist another's need—be such things illegal and immoral. Let me live apart like a wolf; be Timon's one friend—Timon.

All others are my foes and ill-wishers; to hold communion 43
with them is pollution; to set eyes upon one of them marks the

day unholy; let them be to me even as images of bronze or stone. I will receive no herald from them, keep with them no truce; the bounds of my desert are the line they may not cross. Cousin and kinsman, neighbour and countryman—these are dead useless names, wherein fools may find a meaning. Let Timon keep his wealth to himself, scorn all men, and live in solitary luxury, quit of flattery and vulgar praise; let him sacrifice and feast alone, his own associate and neighbour, far from[1] the world. Yea, when his last day comes, let there be none to close his eyes and lay him out, but himself alone.

44 Be the name he loves Misanthropus, and the marks whereby he may be known peevishness and spleen, wrath and rudeness and abhorrence. If ever one burning to death should call for help against the flames, let me help—with pitch and oil. If another be swept past me by a winter torrent, and stretch out his hands for aid, then let mine press him down head under, that he never rise again. So shall they receive as they have given. Mover of this resolution—Timon, son of Echecratides of Collytus. Presiding officer—the same Timon. The ayes have it. Let it be law, and duly observed.

45 All the same, I would give a good deal to have the fact of my enormous wealth generally known; they would all be fit to hang themselves over it.... Why, what is this? Well, that is quick work. Here they come running from every point of the compass, all dusty and panting; they have smelt out the gold somehow or other. Now, shall I get on top of this knoll, keep up a galling fire of stones from my point of vantage, and get rid of them that way? Or shall I make an exception to my law by parleying with them for once? contempt might hit harder than stones. Yes, I think that is better; I will stay where I am, and receive them. Let us see, who is this in front? Ah, Gnathonides the flatterer; when I asked an alms of him

[1] Reading, with Dindorf, ἐκὰς ὤν for ἐκσείων.

the other day, he offered me a halter; many a cask of my wine has he made a beast of himself over. I congratulate him on his speed; first come, first served.

*Gna.* What did I tell them?—Timon was too good a man 46
to be abandoned by Providence. How are you, Timon? as good-looking and good-tempered, as good a fellow, as ever?

*Tim.* And you, Gnathonides, still teaching vultures rapacity, and men cunning?

*Gna.* Ah, he always liked his little joke. But where do you dine? I have brought a new song with me, a march out of the last musical thing on.

*Tim.* It will be a funeral march, then, and a very touching one, with spade *obbligato*.

*Gna.* What means this? This is assault, Timon; just let me find a witness! . . . Oh, my God, my God! . . . I'll have you before the Areopagus for assault and battery.

*Tim.* You'd better not wait much longer, or you'll have to make it murder.

*Gna.* Mercy, mercy! . . . Now, a little gold ointment to heal the wound; it is a first-rate styptic.

*Tim.* What! you *won't* go, won't you?

*Gna.* Oh, I am going. But you shall repent this. Alas, so genial once, and now so rude!

*Tim.* Now who is this with the bald crown? Why, it is 47
Philiades; if there is a loathsome flatterer, it is he. When I sang that song that nobody else would applaud, he lauded me to the skies, and swore no dying swan could be more tuneful; his reward was one of my farms, and a £500 portion for his daughter. And then when he found I was ill, and had come to him for assistance, his generous aid took the form of blows.

*Phil.* You shameless creatures! yes, yes, *now* you know 48
Timon's merits! *now* Gnathonides would be his friend and boon-companion! well, he has the right reward of ingratitude.

Some of us were his familiars and playmates and neighbours; but *we* hold back a little; we would not seem to thrust ourselves upon him. Greeting, lord Timon; pray let me warn you against these abominable flatterers; they are your humble servants during meal-times, and else about as useful as carrion crows. Perfidy is the order of the day; everywhere ingratitude and vileness. I was just bringing a couple of hundred pounds, for your immediate necessities, and was nearly here before I heard of your splendid fortune. So I just came on to give you this word of caution; though indeed you are wise enough (I would take your advice before Nestor's myself) to need none of my counsel.

*Tim.* Quite so, Philiades. But come near, will you not, and receive my—spade!

*Phil.* Help, help! this thankless brute has broken my head, for giving him good counsel.

49 *Tim.* Now for number three. Lawyer Demeas—my cousin, as he calls himself, with a decree in his hand. Between three and four thousand it was that I paid in to the Treasury in ready money for him; he had been fined that amount and imprisoned in default, and I took pity on him. Well, the other day he was distributing-officer of the festival money[1]; when I applied for my share, he pretended I was not a citizen.

50 *Dem.* Hail, Timon, ornament of our race, pillar of Athens, shield of Hellas! The Assembly and both Councils are met, and expect your appearance. But first hear the decree which I have proposed in your honour. 'WHEREAS Timon son of Echecratides of Collytus who adds to high position and character a sagacity unmatched in Greece is a consistent and indefatigable promoter of his country's good and Whereas he has been vic-

[1] Every citizen had the right to receive from the State the small sum which would pay for his admission to theatrical or other festival entertainments.

torious at Olympia on one day in boxing wrestling and running as well as in the two and the four-horse chariot races—'

*Tim.* Why, I was never so much as a spectator at Olympia.

*Dem.* What does that matter? you will be some day. It looks better to have a good deal of that sort in—'and Whereas he fought with distinction last year at Acharnae cutting two Peloponnesian companies to pieces—'

*Tim.* Good work that, considering that my name was not on 51
the muster-rolls, because I could not afford a suit of armour.

*Dem.* Ah, you are modest; but it would be ingratitude in us to forget your services—'and Whereas by political measures and responsible advice and military action he has conferred great benefits on his country Now for all these reasons it is the pleasure of the Assembly and the Council the ten divisions of the High Court and the Borough Councils individually and collectively THAT a golden statue of the said Timon be placed on the Acropolis alongside of Athene with a thunderbolt in the hand and a seven-rayed aureole on the head Further that golden garlands be conferred on him and proclaimed this day at the New Tragedies [1] the said day being kept in his honour as the Dionysia. Mover of the Decree Demeas the pleader the said Timon's near relation and disciple the said Timon being as distinguished in pleading as in all else wherein it pleases him to excel.'

So runs the decree. I had designed also to present to you 52
my son, whom I have named Timon after you.

*Tim.* Why, I thought you were a bachelor, Demeas.

*Dem.* Ah, but I intend to marry next year; my child—which is to be a boy—I hereby name Timon.

*Tim.* I doubt whether you will feel like marrying, my man, when I have given you—this!

*Dem.* Oh Lord! what is that for? . . . You are plotting

[1] See *Dionysia* in Notes.

a *coup d'état*, you Timon; you assault free men, and you are neither a free man nor a citizen yourself. You shall soon be called to account for your crimes; it was you set fire to the Acropolis, for one thing.

53 *Tim.* Why, you scoundrel, the Acropolis has not been set on fire; you are a common blackmailer.

*Dem.* You got your gold by breaking into the Treasury.

*Tim.* It has not been broken into, either; you are not even plausible.

*Dem.* There is time for the burglary yet; meantime, you are in possession of the treasures.

*Tim.* Well, here is another for you, anyhow.

*Dem.* Oh! oh! my back!

*Tim.* Don't make such a noise, if you don't want a third. It would be too absurd, you know, if I could cut two companies of Spartans to pieces without my armour, and not be able to give a single little scoundrel his deserts. My Olympic boxing and wrestling victories would be thrown away.

54 Whom have we now? is this Thrasycles the philosopher? sure enough it is. A halo of beard, eyebrows an inch above their place, superiority in his air, a look that might storm heaven, locks waving to the wind—'tis a very Boreas or Triton from Zeuxis' pencil. This hero of the careful get-up, the solemn gait, the plain attire—in the morning he will utter a thousand maxims, expounding Virtue, arraigning self-indulgence, lauding simplicity; and then, when he gets to dinner after his bath, his servant fills him a bumper (he prefers it neat), and draining this Lethe-draught he proceeds to turn his morning maxims inside out; he swoops like a hawk on dainty dishes, elbows his neighbour aside, fouls his beard with trickling sauce, laps like a dog, with his nose in his plate, as if he expected to find Virtue there, and runs his finger all round the bowl, not to lose a drop of the gravy.

Let him monopolize pastry or joint, he will still criticize the 55
carving—that is all the satisfaction his ravenous greed brings
him—; when the wine is in, singing and dancing are delights
not fierce enough; he must brawl and rave. He has plenty to
say in his cups—he is then at his best in that kind—upon tem-
perance and decorum; he is full of these when his potations
have reduced him to ridiculous stuttering. Next the wine
disagrees with him, and at last he is carried out of the room,
holding on with all his might to the flute-girl. Take him sober,
for that matter, and you will hardly find his match at lying,
effrontery or avarice. He is *facile princeps* of flatterers, perjury
sits on his tongue-tip, imposture goes before him, and shame-
lessness is his good comrade; oh, he is a most ingenious piece
of work, finished at all points, a *multum in parvo*. I am afraid
his kind heart will be grieved presently. Why, how is this,
Thrasycles? I must say, you have taken your time about
coming.

*Thr.* Ah, Timon, I am not come like the rest of the crowd; 56
*they* are dazzled by your wealth; they are gathered together
with an eye to gold and silver and high living; they will soon
be showing their servile tricks before your unsuspicious, generous
self. As for me, you know a crust is all the dinner I care for;
the relish I like best is a bit of thyme or cress; on festal days
I may go as far as a sprinkling of salt. My drink is the crystal
spring; and this threadbare cloak is better than your gay robes.
Gold—I value it no higher than pebbles on the beach. What
brought *me* was concern for you; I would not have you ruined
by this same pestilent wealth, this temptation for plunderers;
many is the man it has sunk in helpless misery. Take my advice,
and fling it bodily into the sea; a good man, to whom the
wealth of philosophy is revealed, has no need of the other. It does
not matter about deep water, my good sir; wade in up to your
waist when the tide is near flood, and *let no one see you but me.*

57 Or if that is not satisfactory, here is another plan even better. Get it all out of the house as quick as you can, not reserving a penny for yourself, and distribute it to the poor—five shillings to one, five pounds to another, a hundred to a third; philosophy might constitute a claim to a double or triple share. For my part—and I do not ask for myself, only to divide it among my needy friends—I should be quite content with as much as my scrip would hold; it is something short of two standard bushels; if one professes philosophy, one must be moderate and have few needs—none that go beyond the capacity of a scrip.

*Tim.* Very right, Thrasycles. But instead of a mere scripful, pray take a whole headful of clouts, standard measure by the spade.

*Thr.* Land of liberty, equality, legality! protect me against this ruffian!

*Tim.* What is your grievance, my good man? is the measure short? here is a pint or two extra, then, to put it right.

Why, what now? here comes a crowd; friend Blepsias,
58 Laches, Gniphon; their name is legion; they shall howl soon. I had better get up on the rock; my poor tired spade wants a little rest; I will collect all the stones I can lay hands on, and pepper them at long range.

*Bl.* Don't throw, Timon; we are going.

*Tim.* Whether the retreat will be bloodless, however, is another question. H.

## PROMETHEUS ON CAUCASUS

*Hermes. Hephaestus. Prometheus.*

*Her.* This, Hephaestus, is the Caucasus, to which it is our painful duty to nail our companion. We have now to select a suitable crag, free from snow, on which the chains will have a good hold, and the prisoner will hang in all publicity.

*Heph.* True. It will not do to fix him too low down, or

these *men* of his might come to their maker's assistance; nor at the top, where he would be invisible from the earth. What do you say to a middle course? Let him hang over this precipice, with his arms stretched across from crag to crag.

*Her.* The very thing. Steep rocks, slightly overhanging, inaccessible on every side; no foothold but a mere ledge, with scarcely room for the tips of one's toes; altogether a sweet spot for a crucifixion. Now, Prometheus, come and be nailed up; there is no time to lose.

*Prom.* Nay, hear me; Hephaestus! Hermes! I suffer in- 2
justice: have compassion on my woes!

*Her.* In other words, disobey orders, and promptly be gibbeted in your stead! Do you suppose there is not room on the Caucasus to peg out a couple of us? Come, your right hand! clamp it down, Hephaestus, and in with the nails; bring down the hammer with a will. Now the left; make sure work of that too.—So!—The eagle will shortly be here, to trim your liver; so ingenious an artist is entitled to every attention.

*Prom.* O Cronus, and Iapetus, and Mother Earth! Behold 3
the sufferings of the innocent!

*Her.* Why, as to innocence,—to begin with, there was that business of the sacrificial meats, your manner of distributing which was most unfair, most disingenuous: you got all the choice parts for yourself, and put Zeus off with bones 'wrapped up in shining fat'; I remember the passage in Hesiod; those are his very words. Then you made these human beings; creatures of unparalleled wickedness, the women especially. And to crown all, you stole fire, the most precious possession of the Gods, and gave it to them. And with all this on your conscience, you protest that you have done nothing to deserve captivity.

*Prom.* Ah, Hermes; you are as bad as Hector; you 'blame 4
the blameless.' For such crimes as these, I deserve a round

pension, if justice were done. And by the way, I should like, if you can spare the time, to answer to these charges, and satisfy you of the injustice of my sentence. You can employ your practised eloquence on behalf of Zeus, and justify his conduct in nailing me up here at the Gates of the Caspian, for all Scythia to behold and pity.

*Her.* There is nothing to be gained now by an appeal to another court; it is too late. Proceed, however. We have to wait in any case till the eagle comes to look after that liver of yours; and the time might be worse spent than in listening to the subtleties of such a master in impudence as yourself.

5 *Prom.* You begin then, Hermes. Exert all your powers of invective; leave no stone unturned to establish the righteousness of papa's judgements.—You, Hephaestus, shall compose the jury.

*Heph.* The jury! Not a bit of it; I am a party in this case. My furnace has been cold, ever since you stole that fire.

*Prom.* Well, at this rate you had better divide the prosecution between you. You conduct the case of larceny, and Hermes can handle the man-making, and the misappropriation of meat. I shall expect a great deal of you; you are both artists.

*Heph.* Hermes shall speak for me. The law is not in my line; my forge takes up most of my time. But Hermes is an orator; he has made a study of these things.

*Prom.* Well! I should never have thought that Hermes would have the heart to reproach me with larceny; he ought to have a fellow-feeling for me there. However, with this further responsibility on your shoulders, there is no time to be lost, son of Maia; out with your accusation, and have done with it.

6 *Her.* To deal adequately with your crimes, Prometheus, would require many words and much preparation. It is not enough to mention the several counts of the accusation; how, entrusted with the distribution of meats, you defrauded the crown by retaining the choicer portions for your own use;

how you created the race of men, with absolutely no justification for so doing; how you stole fire and conveyed it to these same men. You seem not to realize, my friend, that, all things considered, Zeus has dealt very handsomely by you. Now, if you deny the charges, I shall be compelled to establish your guilt at some length, and to set the facts in the clearest possible light. But if you admit the distribution of meat in the manner described, the introduction of men, and the theft of fire,—then my case is complete, and there is no more to be said. To expatiate further would be to talk nonsense.

*Prom.* Perhaps there has been some nonsense talked already; 7
that remains to be seen. But as you say your case is now complete, I will see what I can do in the way of refutation. And first about that meat. Though, upon my word, I blush for Zeus when I name it: to think that he should be so touchy about trifles, as to send off a God of my quality to crucifixion, just because he found a little bit of bone in his share! Does he forget the services I have rendered him? And does he think what it is that he is so angry about, and how childish it is to show temper about a little thing like that? What if he *did* miss getting the better share? Why, Hermes, these tricks 8
that are played over the wine-cups are not worth thinking twice about. A joke, perhaps, is carried a little too far, in the warmth of the feast; still, it *is* a joke, and resentment should be left behind in the dregs of the bowl. I have no patience with your long memories; this nursing of grievances, this raking up of last night's squabbles, is unworthy of a king, let alone a king of Gods. Once take away from our feasts the little elegancies of quip and crank and wile, and what is left? Muzziness; repletion; silence;—cheerful accompaniments these to the wine-bowl! For my part, I never supposed that Zeus would give the matter a thought the next morning; much less that he would make such a stir about it, and think himself

so mightily injured; my little manœuvre with the meat was merely a playful experiment, to see which he would choose.
9 It might have been worse. Instead of giving him the inferior half, I might have defrauded him of the whole. And what if I had? Would that have been a case for putting heaven and earth in commotion, for deep designs of chain and cross and Caucasus, dispatchings of eagles, rendings of livers? These things tell a sad tale, do they not, of the puny soul, the little mind, the touchy temper of the aggrieved party? How would he take the loss of a whole ox, who storms to such purpose over
10 a few pounds of meat? How much more reasonable is the conduct of mortals, though one would have expected them to be more irritable than Gods! A mortal would never want his cook crucified for dipping a finger into the stew-pan, or filching a mouthful from the roast; they overlook these things. At the worst their resentment is satisfied with a box on the ears or a rap on the head. I find no precedent among them for crucifixion in such cases. So much for the affair of the meat; there is little credit to be got in the refutation of such a charge, and still less in the bringing of it.

11 I am next to speak of my creation of mankind. And here the terms of your accusation are ambiguous. I have to choose between two distinct possibilities. Do you maintain that I had no right to create men at all, that I ought to have left the senseless clay alone? Or do you only complain of the form in which I designed them? However, I shall have something to say on both points. I shall first endeavour to show that no harm has accrued to the Gods from my bringing mankind into existence; and shall then proceed to the positive advantages and improvements which have resulted to them from the peopling
12 of the earth. The question as to the harm done by my innovation is best answered by an appeal to the past, to those days when the race of heaven-born Gods stood alone, and earth was

a hideous shapeless mass, a tangle of rude vegetation. The Gods had no altars then, nor temples (for who should raise them ?), no images of wood or stone, such as now abound in every corner of the earth, and are honoured with all observance. It was to me that the idea occurred—amid my ceaseless meditations on the common welfare, on the aggrandizement of the Gods and the promotion of order and beauty in the universe—of setting all to rights with a handful of clay ; of creating living things, and moulding them after our own likeness. I saw what was lacking to our godhead : some counterpart, some foil wherein to set off its blessedness. And that counterpart must be mortal ; but in all else exquisitely contrived, perfect in intelligence, keen to appreciate our superiority. Thereupon, I moulded 13
my material,

With water mingling clay,

and created man, calling in Athene to aid me in the task. And this is my rank offence against the Gods. Destructive work,—to reduce inanimate clay to life and motion ! The Gods, it seems, are Gods no longer, now that there are mortal creatures on the earth. To judge at least by Zeus's indignation, one would suppose that the Gods suffered some loss of prestige from the creation of mankind ; unless it is that he is afraid of another revolt, of their waging war with heaven, like the Giants.

That the cause of the Gods suffered nothing at my hands is 14
evident ; show me the slightest instance to the contrary, and I will say no more ; I have but my deserts. But for the positive benefits I have conferred, use the evidence of your eyes. The earth, no longer barren and untilled, is decked with cities and farms and the fruits of cultivation ; the sea has its ships, the islands their inhabitants. Everywhere are altars and temples, everywhere festivals and sacrifices :

Zeus with his presence fills their gatherings,
He fills their streets.

Had I created mankind for my own private convenience, it might perhaps have denoted a grasping spirit: but I made them common property; they are at the service of every God of you. Nay more: temples of Zeus, and Apollo, and Hera, temples of Hermes, are everywhere to be seen; but who ever saw a temple of Prometheus? You may judge from this, how far I have sacrificed the common cause to my private ambition.

15 And further. Consider, Hermes: can any good thing whatsoever, be it gift of Nature or work of our hands, give the full measure of enjoyment to its possessor, when there is none to see, none to admire? You see whither my question tends? But for mankind, the glories of the universe must have been without a witness; and there was little satisfaction to be derived from a wealth which was doomed to excite no envy in others. We should have lacked a standard for comparison; and should never have known the extent of our happiness, while all were as happy as ourselves. The great is not great, till it is compared with the small. Yet instead of honouring me for my political insight, you crucify me; such are the wages of wisdom!

16 Ah, but (you will say) there is so much wickedness among them; adultery, war, incest, parricide. Well, I fancy these are not unknown among ourselves? And I am sure no one would think that a reason for saying that Uranus and Ge made a mistake in creating us. Or again, you will complain that we have so much trouble in looking after them. At that rate, a shepherd ought to object to the possession of a flock, because he has to look after it. Besides, a certain show of occupation is rather gratifying than otherwise; the responsibility is not unwelcome, —it helps to pass the time. What should we do, if we had not mankind to think of? There would be nothing to live for; we should sit about drinking nectar and gorging ourselves

17 with ambrosia. But what fairly takes away my breath is, your

assurance in finding fault with my *women* in particular, when all the time you are in love with them: our bulls and satyrs and swans are never tired of making descents upon the Earth; women, they find, are good enough to be made the mothers of Gods!

Yes, yes (you will say), it was quite right that men should be created, but they should not have been made in our likeness. And what better model could I have taken than this, whose perfection I knew? Was I to make them brute beasts without understanding? Had they been other than they are, how should they have paid you due honour and sacrifice? When the hecatombs are getting ready, you think nothing of a journey to the ends of the earth to see the 'blameless Ethiopians'; and my reward for procuring you these advantages is—crucifixion! But on this subject I have said enough.

And now, with your permission, I will approach the subject 18
of that stolen fire, of which we hear so much. I have a question to ask, which I beg you will answer frankly. Has there been one spark less fire in Heaven, since men shared it with us? Of course not. It is the nature of fire, that it does not become less by being imparted to others. A fire is not put out by kindling another from it. No, this is sheer envy: you cannot bear that men should have a share of this necessary, though you have suffered no harm thereby. For shame! Gods should be beneficent, 'givers of good'; they should be above all envy. Had I taken away fire altogether, and left not a spark behind, it would have been no great loss. You have no use for it. You are never cold; you need no artificial light; nor is ambrosia improved by boiling. To man, on the other hand, fire is in- 19
dispensable for many purposes, particularly for those of sacrifice: how else are they to fill their streets with the savour of burnt-offerings, and the fumes of frankincense? how else to burn fat thigh-pieces upon your altars? I observe that you take a par-

ticular pleasure in the steam arising therefrom, and think no feast more delicious than the smell of roast meat, as it mounts heavenwards

In eddying clouds of smoke.

Your present complaint, you see, is sadly at variance with this taste. I wonder you do not forbid the Sun to shine on mankind. He too is of fire, and fire of a purer and diviner quality. Has anything been said to *him* about his lavish expenditure of your property?

And now I have done. If there is any flaw in my defence, it is for you two to refute me. I shall answer your objections in due course.

20 *Her.* Nay, you are too hard for us, Prometheus; we will not attempt a sophist of your mettle. Well for you that Zeus is not within earshot, or you would have had a round dozen of hungry vultures to reckon with, for certain; in clearing your own character, you have grievously mishandled his. But one thing puzzles me: you are a prophet; you ought to have foreseen your sentence.

*Prom.* All this I knew, and more than this; for I shall be released; nay, even now the day is not far off when one of your blood shall come from Thebes, and shoot this eagle with which you threaten me[1].

*Her.* With all my heart! I shall be delighted to see you free again, and feasting in our midst; but not, my friend, not carving for us!

21 *Prom.* You may take my word for it; I shall be with you again. I have the wherewithal to pay abundantly for my ransom.

*Her.* Oh, indeed? Come, tell us all about it.

*Prom.* You know Thetis— But no; the secret is best kept. Ransom and reward depend upon it.

[1] See *Prometheus* in Notes.

*Her.* Well, you know best. Now, Hephaestus, we must be going; see, here comes the eagle.—Bear a brave heart, Prometheus; and all speed to your Theban archer, who is to set a term to this creature's activity. F.

# DIALOGUES OF THE GODS

## I

*Prometheus. Zeus*

*Prom.* Release me, Zeus; I have suffered enough.

*Zeus.* Release you? you? Why, by rights your irons should be heavier, you should have the whole weight of Caucasus upon you, and instead of one, a dozen vultures, not just pecking at your liver, but scratching out your eyes. You made these abominable human creatures to vex us, you stole our fire, you invented women. I need not remind you how you overreached me about the meat-offerings; my portion, bones disguised in fat: yours, all the good.

*Prom.* And have I not been punished enough—riveted to the Caucasus all these years, feeding your bird (on which all worst curses light!) with my liver?

*Zeus.* 'Tis not a tithe of your deserts.

*Prom.* Consider, I do not ask you to release me for nothing. I offer you information which is invaluable.

*Zeus.* Promethean wiles!

*Prom.* Wiles? to what end? you can find the Caucasus another time; and there are chains to be had, if you catch me cheating.

*Zeus.* Tell me first the nature of your 'invaluable' offer.

*Prom.* If I tell you your present errand right, will that convince you that I can prophesy too?

*Zeus.* Of course it will.

*Prom.* You are bound on a little visit to Thetis.

*Zeus.* Right so far. And the sequel? I trust you now.

*Prom.* Have no dealings with her, Zeus. As sure as Nereus's daughter conceives by you, your child shall mete you the measure you meted to——

*Zeus.* I shall lose my kingdom, you would say?

*Prom.* Avert it, Fate! I say only, that union portends this issue.

*Zeus.* Thetis, farewell! and for this Hephaestus shall set you free. H.

## II

*Eros. Zeus*

*Eros.* You might let me off, Zeus! I suppose it *was* rather too bad of me; but there!—I am but a child; a wayward child.

*Zeus.* A child, and born before Iapetus was ever thought of? You bad old man! Just because you have no beard, and no white hairs, are you going to pass yourself off for a child?

*Eros.* Well, and what such mighty harm has the old man ever done you, that you should talk of chains?

*Zeus.* Ask your own guilty conscience, what harm. The pranks you have played me! Satyr, bull, swan, eagle, shower of gold,—I have been everything in my time; and I have you to thank for it. You never by any chance make the women in love with *me*; no one is ever smitten with *my* charms, that I have noticed. No, there must be magic in it always; I must be kept well out of sight. They like the bull or the swan well enough: but once let them set eyes on *me*, and they are frightened out of their lives.

*Eros.* Well, of course. They are but mortals; the sight of Zeus is too much for them.

*Zeus.* Then why are Branchus and Hyacinth so fond of Apollo?

*Eros.* Daphne ran away from him, anyhow; in spite of his beautiful hair and his smooth chin. Now, shall I tell you the way to win hearts? Keep that aegis of yours quiet, and leave the thunderbolt at home; make yourself as smart as you can; curl your hair and tie it up with a bit of ribbon, get a purple cloak, and gold-bespangled shoes, and march forth to the music of flute and drum;—and see if you don't get a finer following than Dionysus, for all his Maenads.

*Zeus.* Pooh! I'll win no hearts on such terms.

*Eros.* Oh, in that case, don't fall in love. Nothing could be simpler.

*Zeus.* I dare say; but I *like* being in love, only I don't like all this fuss. Now mind; if I let you off, it is on this understanding. F.

## III

*Zeus. Hermes*

*Zeus.* Hermes, you know Inachus's beautiful daughter?

*Her.* I do. Io, you mean?

*Zeus.* Yes; she is not a girl now, but a heifer.

*Her.* Magic at work! how did that come about?

*Zeus.* Hera had a jealous fit, and transformed her. But that is not all; she has thought of a new punishment for the poor thing. She has put a cowherd in charge, who is all over eyes; this Argus, as he is called, pastures the heifer, and never goes to sleep.

*Her.* Well, what am I to do?

*Zeus.* Fly down to Nemea, where the pasture is, kill Argus, take Io across the sea to Egypt, and convert her into Isis. She shall be henceforth an Egyptian Goddess, flood the Nile, regulate the winds, and rescue mariners. H.

# VI

*Hera. Zeus*

*Hera.* Zeus! What is your opinion of this man Ixion?

*Zeus.* Why, my dear, I think he is a very good sort of man; and the best of company. Indeed, if he were unworthy of our company, he would not be here.

*Hera.* He *is* unworthy! He is a villain! Discard him!

*Zeus.* Eh? What has he been after? I must know about this.

*Hera.* Certainly you must; though I scarce know how to tell you. The wretch!

*Zeus.* Oh, oh; if he is a 'wretch,' you must certainly tell me all about it. I know what 'wretch' means, on your discreet tongue. What, he has been making love?

*Hera.* And to me! to me of all people! It has been going on for a long time. At first, when he would keep looking at me, I had no idea—. And then he would sigh and groan; and when I handed my cup to Ganymede after drinking, he would insist on having it, and would stop drinking to kiss it, and lift it up to his eyes; and then he would look at me again. And then of course I knew. For a long time I didn't like to say anything to you; I thought his mad fit would pass. But when he actually dared to *speak* to me, I left him weeping and grovelling about, and stopped my ears, so that I might not hear his impertinences, and came to tell you. It is for you to consider what steps you will take.

*Zeus.* Whew! I have a rival, I find; and with my own lawful wife. Here is a rascal who has tippled nectar to some purpose. Well, we have no one but ourselves to blame for it: we make too much of these mortals, admitting them to our table like this. When they drink of our nectar, and behold the beauties of Heaven (so different from those of Earth!), 'tis no

wonder if they fall in love, and form ambitious schemes! Yes, Love is all-powerful; and not with mortals only: we Gods have sometimes fallen beneath his sway.

*Hera.* He has made himself master of *you*; no doubt of that. He does what he likes with you;—leads you by the nose. You follow him whither he chooses, and assume every shape at his command; you are his chattel, his toy. I know how it will be: you are going to let Ixion off, because you have had relations with his wife; she is the mother of Pirithous.

*Zeus.* Why, what a memory you have for these little outings of mine!—Now, my idea about Ixion is this. It would never do to punish him, or to exclude him from our table; that would not look well. No; as he is so fond of you, so hard hit—even to weeping point, you tell me,—

*Hera.* Zeus! What *are* you going to say?

*Zeus.* Don't be alarmed. Let us make a cloud-phantom in your likeness, and after dinner, as he lies awake (which of course he will do, being in love), let us take it and lay it by his side. 'Twill put him out of his pain: he will fancy he has attained his desire.

*Hera.* Never! The presumptuous villain!

*Zeus.* Yes, I know. But what harm can it do to you, if Ixion makes a conquest of a cloud?

*Hera.* But he will think that *I* am the cloud; he will be working his wicked will upon *me* for all he can tell.

*Zeus.* Now you are talking nonsense. The cloud is not Hera, and Hera is not the cloud. Ixion will be deceived; that is all.

*Hera.* Yes, but these men are all alike—they have no delicacy. I suppose, when he goes home, he will boast to every one of how he has enjoyed the embraces of Hera, the wife of Zeus! Why, he may tell them that *I* am in love with *him*! And they will believe it; *they* will know nothing about the cloud.

*Zeus.* If he says anything of the kind he shall soon find himself in Hades, spinning round on a wheel for all eternity. That will keep him busy! And serve him right; not for falling in love—I see no great harm in that—but for letting his tongue wag. F.

## VII

*Hephaestus. Apollo*

*Heph.* Have you seen Maia's baby, Apollo? such a pretty little thing, with a smile for everybody; you can see it is going to be a treasure.

*Ap.* That baby a treasure? well, in mischief, Iapetus is young beside it.

*Heph.* Why, what harm can it do, only just born?

*Ap.* Ask Posidon; it stole his trident. Ask Ares; he was surprised to find his sword gone out of the scabbard. Not to mention myself, disarmed of bow and arrows.

*Heph.* Never! that infant? he has hardly found his legs yet; he is not out of his baby-linen.

*Ap.* Ah, you will find out, Hephaestus, if he gets within reach of you.

*Heph.* He has been.

*Ap.* Well? all your tools safe? none missing?

*Heph.* Of course not.

*Ap.* I advise you to make sure.

*Heph.* Zeus! where are my pincers?

*Ap.* Ah, you will find them among the baby-linen.

*Heph.* So light-fingered? one would swear he had practised petty larceny in the womb.

*Ap.* Ah, and you don't know what a glib young chatterbox he is; and, if he has his way, he is to be our errand-boy! Yesterday he challenged Eros—tripped up his heels somehow, and had

him on his back in a twinkling; before the applause was over, he had taken the opportunity of a congratulatory hug from Aphrodite to steal her girdle; Zeus had not done laughing before—the sceptre was gone. If the thunderbolt had not been too heavy, and very hot, he would have made away with that too.

*Heph.* The child has some spirit in him, by your account.

*Ap.* Spirit, yes—and some music, moreover, young as he is.

*Heph.* How can you tell that?

*Ap.* He picked up a dead tortoise somewhere or other, and contrived an instrument with it. He fitted horns to it, with a cross-bar, stuck in pegs, inserted a bridge, and played a sweet tuneful thing that made an old harper like me quite envious. Even at night, Maia was saying, he does not stay in Heaven; he goes down poking his nose into Hades—on a thieves' errand, no doubt. Then he has a pair of wings, and he has made himself a magic wand, which he uses for marshalling souls—convoying the dead to their place.

*Heph.* Ah, I gave him that, for a toy.

*Ap.* And by way of payment he stole—

*Heph.* Well thought on; I must go and get them; you may be right about the baby-linen. H.

## VIII

*Hephaestus. Zeus*

*Heph.* What are your orders, Zeus? You sent for me, and here I am; with such an edge to my axe as would cleave a stone at one blow.

*Zeus.* Ah; that's right, Hephaestus. Just split my head in half, will you?

*Heph.* You think I am mad, perhaps?—Seriously, now, what can I do for you?

*Zeus.* What I say: crack my skull. Any insubordination,

now, and you shall taste my resentment; it will not be the first time. Come, a good lusty stroke, and quick about it. I am in the pangs of travail; my brain is in a whirl.

*Heph.* Mind you, the consequences may be serious: the axe is sharp, and will prove but a rough midwife.

*Zeus.* Hew away, and fear nothing. I know what I am about.

*Heph.* H'm. I don't like it: however, one must obey orders. . . . Why, what have we here? A maiden in full armour! This is no joke, Zeus. You might well be waspish, with this great girl growing up beneath your *pia mater*; in armour, too! You have been carrying a regular barracks on your shoulders all this time. So active too! See, she is dancing a war-dance, with shield and spear in full swing. She is like one inspired; and (what is more to the point) she is extremely pretty, and has come to marriageable years in these few minutes; those grey eyes, even, look well beneath a helmet. Zeus, I claim her as the fee for my midwifery.

*Zeus.* Impossible! She is determined to remain a maid for ever. Not that *I* have any objection, personally.

*Heph.* That is all I want. You can leave the rest to me. I'll carry her off this moment.

*Zeus.* Well, if you think it so easy. But I am sure it is a hopeless case. F.

## XI

*Aphrodite. Selene*

*Aph.* What is this I hear about you, Selene? When your car is over Caria, you stop it to gaze at Endymion sleeping hunter-fashion in the open; sometimes, they tell me, you actually get out and go down to him

*Sel.* Ah, Aphrodite, ask that son of yours; it is he must answer for it all.

*Aph.* Well now, what a naughty boy! he gets his own mother into all sorts of scrapes; I must go down, now to Ida for Anchises of Troy, now to Lebanon for my Assyrian stripling;—mine? no, he put Persephone in love with him too, and so robbed me of half my darling. I have told him many a time that if he would not behave himself I would break his artillery for him, and clip his wings; and before now I have smacked his little behind with my slipper. It is no use; he is frightened and cries for a minute or two, and then forgets all about it. But tell me, is Endymion handsome? That is always a comfort in our humiliation.

*Sel. Most* handsome, *I* think, my dear; you should see him when he has spread out his cloak on the rock and is asleep; his javelins in his left hand, just slipping from his grasp, the right arm bent upwards, making a bright frame to the face, and he breathing softly in helpless slumber. Then I come noiselessly down, treading on tiptoe not to wake and startle him—but there, you know all about it; why tell you the rest? I am dying of love, that is all. H.

## XII

*Aphrodite. Eros*

*Aph.* Child, child, you must think what you are doing. It is bad enough on earth,—you are always inciting men to do some mischief, to themselves or to one another;—but I am speaking of the Gods. You change Zeus into shape after shape as the fancy takes you; you make Selene come down from the sky; you keep Helius loitering about with Clymene, till he sometimes forgets to drive out at all. As for the naughty tricks you play on your own mother, you know you are safe there. But Rhea! how could you *dare* to set her on thinking of that young fellow in Phrygia, an old lady like her, the mother of so many Gods?

Why, you have made her quite mad: she harnesses those lions of hers, and drives about all over Ida with the Corybantes, who are as mad as herself, shrieking high and low for Attis; and there they are, slashing their arms with swords, rushing about over the hills, like wild things, with dishevelled hair, blowing horns, beating drums, clashing cymbals; all Ida is one mad tumult. I am quite uneasy about it; yes, you wicked boy, your poor mother is quite uneasy: some day when Rhea is in one of her mad fits (or when she is in her senses, more likely), she will send the Corybantes after you, with orders to tear you to pieces, or throw you to the lions. You are so venturesome!

*Eros.* Be under no alarm, mother; I understand lions perfectly by this time. I get on to their backs every now and then, and take hold of their manes, and ride them about; and when I put my hand into their mouths, they only lick it, and let me take it out again. Besides, how is Rhea going to have time to attend to me? She is too busy with Attis. And I see no harm in just pointing out beautiful things to people; they can leave them alone;—it is nothing to do with me. And how would you like it if Ares were not in love with you, or you with him?

*Aph.* Masterful boy! always the last word! But you will remember this some day. F.

## XIII

*Zeus. Asclepius. Heracles*

*Zeus.* Now, Asclepius and Heracles, stop that quarrelling; you might as well be men; such behaviour is very improper and out of place at the table of the Gods.

*Her.* Is this druggist fellow to have a place above me, Zeus?

*Asc.* Of course I am; I am your better.

*Her.* Why, you numskull? because it was Zeus's bolt that

cracked your skull, for your unholy doings, and now you have been allowed your immortality again out of sheer pity ?

*Asc.* You twit me with my fiery end ; you seem to have forgotten that you too were burnt to death, on Oeta.

*Her.* Was there no difference between your life and mine, then ? I am Zeus's son, and it is well known how I toiled, cleansing the earth, conquering monsters, and chastising men of violence. Whereas you are a root-grubber and a quack ; I dare say you have your use for doctoring sick men, but you never did a bold deed in your life.

*Asc.* That comes well from you, whose burns I healed, when you came up all singed not so long ago ; between the tunic and the flames, your body was half consumed. Anyhow, it would be enough to mention that I was never a slave like you, never combed wool in Lydia, masquerading in a purple shawl and being slippered by an Omphale, never killed my wife and children in a fit of the spleen.

*Her.* If you don't stop being rude, I shall soon show you that immortality is not much good. I will take you up and pitch you head over heels out of Heaven, and Apollo himself shall never mend your broken crown.

*Zeus.* Cease, I say, and let us hear ourselves speak, or I will send you both away from table. Heracles, Asclepius died before you, and has the right to a better place. H.

## XIV

*Hermes. Apollo*

*Her.* Why so sad, Apollo ?

*Ap.* Alas, Hermes,—my love !

*Her.* Oh ; that's bad. What, are you still brooding over that affair of Daphne ?

*Ap.* No. I grieve for my beloved; the Laconian, the son of Oebalus.

*Her.* Hyacinth? he is not dead?

*Ap.* Dead.

*Her.* Who killed him? Who could have the heart? That lovely boy!

*Ap.* It was the work of my own hand.

*Her.* You must have been mad!

*Ap.* Not mad; it was an accident.

*Her.* Oh? and how did it happen?

*Ap.* He was learning to throw the quoit, and I was throwing with him. I had just sent my quoit up into the air as usual, when jealous Zephyr (damned be he above all winds! he had long been in love with Hyacinth, though Hyacinth would have nothing to say to him)—Zephyr came blustering down from Taygetus, and dashed the quoit upon the child's head; blood flowed from the wound in streams, and in one moment all was over. My first thought was of revenge; I lodged an arrow in Zephyr, and pursued his flight to the mountain. As for the child, I buried him at Amyclae, on the fatal spot; and from his blood I have caused a flower to spring up, sweetest, fairest of flowers, inscribed with letters of woe.—Is my grief unreasonable?

*Her.* It is, Apollo. You knew that you had set your heart upon a mortal: grieve not then for his mortality. F.

## XV

*Hermes. Apollo*

*Her.* To think that a cripple and a blacksmith like him should marry two such queens of beauty as Aphrodite and Charis!

*Ap.* Luck, Hermes—that is all. But I do wonder at their putting up with his company; they see him running with

sweat, bent over the forge, all sooty-faced ; and yet they cuddle and kiss him, and sleep with him !

*Her.* Yes, it makes me angry too ; how I envy him ! Ah, Apollo, you may let your locks grow, and play your harp, and be proud of your looks ; I am a healthy fellow, and can touch the lyre ; but, when it comes to bedtime, we lie alone.

*Ap.* Well, my loves never prosper ; Daphne and Hyacinth were my great passions ; she so detested me that being turned to a tree was more attractive than I ; and him I killed with a quoit. Nothing is left me of them but wreaths of their leaves and flowers.

*Her.* Ah, once, once, I and Aphrodite—but no ; no boasting.

*Ap.* I know ; that is how Hermaphroditus is accounted for. But perhaps you can tell me how it is that Aphrodite and Charis are not jealous of one another.

*Her.* Because one is his wife in Lemnus and the other in Heaven. Besides, Aphrodite cares most about Ares ; he is her real love ; so she does not trouble her head about the blacksmith.

*Ap.* Do you think Hephaestus sees ?

*Her.* Oh, he sees, yes ; but what can he do ? he knows what a martial young fellow it is ; so he holds his tongue. He talks of inventing a net, though, to take them in the act with.

*Ap.* Ah, all I know is, I would not mind being taken in that act. H.

## XVI

*Hera. Leto*

*Hera.* I must congratulate you, madam, on the children with whom you have presented Zeus.

*Leto.* Ah, madam ; we cannot all be the proud mothers of Hephaestuses.

*Hera.* My boy may be a cripple, but at least he is of some use. He is a wonderful smith, and has made Heaven look another place ; and Aphrodite thought him worth marrying,

and dotes on him still. But those two of yours!—that girl is wild and mannish to a degree; and now she has gone off to Scythia, and her doings *there* are no secret; she is as bad as any Scythian herself,—butchering strangers and eating them! Apollo, too, who pretends to be so clever, with his bow and his lyre and his medicine and his prophecies; those oracle-shops that he has opened at Delphi, and Clarus, and Dindyma, are a cheat; he takes good care to be on the safe side by giving ambiguous answers that no one can understand, and makes money out of it, for there are plenty of fools who like being imposed upon,—but sensible people know well enough that most of it is clap-trap. The prophet did not know that he was to kill his favourite with a quoit; he never foresaw that Daphne would run away from him, so handsome as he is, too, such beautiful hair! I am not sure, after all, that there is much to choose between your children and Niobe's.

*Leto.* Oh, of course; my children are butchers and impostors. I know how you hate the sight of them. You cannot bear to hear my girl complimented on her looks, or my boy's playing admired by the company.

*Hera.* His playing, madam!—excuse a smile;—why, if the Muses had not favoured him, his contest with Marsyas would have cost him his skin; poor Marsyas was shamefully used on that occasion; 'twas a judicial murder.—As for your charming daughter, when Actaeon once caught sight of her charms, she had to set the dogs upon him, for fear he should tell all he knew: I forbear to ask where the innocent child picked up her knowledge of obstetrics.

*Leto.* You set no small value on yourself, madam, because you are the wife of Zeus, and share his throne; you may insult whom you please. But there will be tears presently, when the next bull or swan sets out on his travels, and you are left neglected.

F.

## XVIII

*Hera. Zeus*

*Hera.* Well, Zeus, I should be ashamed if *I* had such a son; so effeminate, and so given to drinking; tying up his hair in a ribbon, indeed! and spending most of his time among mad women, himself as much a woman as any of them; dancing to flute and drum and cymbal! He resembles any one rather than his father.

*Zeus.* Anyhow, my dear, this wearer of ribbons, this woman among women, not content with conquering Lydia, subduing Thrace, and enthralling the people of Tmolus, has been on an expedition all the way to India with his womanish host, captured elephants, taken possession of the country, and led their king captive after a brief resistance. And he never stopped dancing all the time, never relinquished the thyrsus and the ivy; always drunk (as you say) and always inspired! If any scoffer presumes to make light of his ceremonial, he does not go unpunished; he is bound with vine-twigs; or his own mother mistakes him for a fawn, and tears him limb from limb. Are not these manful doings, worthy of a son of Zeus? No doubt he is fond of his comforts, too, and his amusements; we need not complain of that: you may judge from his drunken achievements, what a handful the fellow would be if he were sober.

*Hera.* I suppose you will tell me next, that the invention of wine is very much to his credit; though you see for yourself how drunken men stagger about and misbehave themselves; one would think the liquor had made them mad. Look at Icarius, the first to whom he gave the vine: beaten to death with mattocks by his own boon companions!

*Zeus.* Pooh, nonsense. That is not Dionysus's fault, nor the wine's fault; it comes of the immoderate use of it. Men *will*

drink their wine neat, and drink too much of it. Taken in moderation, it engenders cheerfulness and benevolence. Dionysus is not likely to treat any of his guests as Icarius was treated. —No; I see what it is:—you are jealous, my love; you can't forget about Semele, and so you must disparage the noble achievements of her son. F.

## XIX

*Aphrodite. Eros*

*Aph.* Eros, dear, you have had your victories over most of the Gods—Zeus, Posidon, Rhea, Apollo, nay, your own mother; how is it you make an exception for Athene? against her your torch has no fire, your quiver no arrows, your right hand no cunning.

*Eros.* I am afraid of her, mother; those awful flashing eyes! she is like a man, only worse. When I go against her with my arrow on the string, a toss of her plume frightens me; my hand shakes so that it drops the bow.

*Aph.* I should have thought Ares was more terrible still; but you disarmed and conquered him.

*Eros.* Ah, he is only too glad to have me; he calls me to him. Athene always eyes me so! once when I flew close past her, quite by accident, with my torch, 'If you come near me,' she called out, 'I swear by my father, I will run you through with my spear, or take you by the foot and drop you into Tartarus, or tear you in pieces with my own hands'—and more such dreadful things. And she has such a sour look; and then on her breast she wears that horrid face with the snaky hair; that frightens me worst of all; the nasty bogy—I run away directly I see it.

*Aph.* Well, well, you are afraid of Athene and the Gorgon; at least so you say, though you do not mind Zeus's thunderbolt

a bit. But why do you let the Muses go scot free? do *they* toss their plumes and hold out Gorgons' heads?

*Eros.* Ah, mother, they make me bashful; they are so grand, always studying and composing; I love to stand there listening to their music.

*Aph.* Let them pass too, because they are grand. And why do you never take a shot at Artemis?

*Eros.* Why, the great thing is that I cannot catch her; she is always over the hills and far away. But besides that, her heart is engaged already.

*Aph.* Where, child?

*Eros.* In hunting stags and fawns; she is so fleet, she catches them up, or else shoots them; she can think of nothing else. Her brother, now, though he is an archer too, and draws a good arrow——

*Aph.* I know, child, you have hit *him* often enough.

H.

## XX

### The Judgement of Paris

*Zeus. Hermes. Hera. Athene. Aphrodite. Paris*

*Zeus.* Hermes, take this apple, and go with it to Phrygia; on the Gargaran peak of Ida you will find Priam's son, the herdsman. Give him this message: 'Paris, because you are handsome, and wise in the things of love, Zeus commands you to judge between the Goddesses, and say which is the most beautiful. And the prize shall be this apple.'—Now, you three, there is no time to be lost: away with you to your judge. I will have nothing to do with the matter: I love you all exactly alike, and I only wish you could all three win. If I were to give the prize to one of you, the other two would hate me, of course. In these circumstances, I am ill qualified to be your judge. But

this young Phrygian to whom you are going is of the royal blood —a relation of Ganymede's,—and at the same time a simple countryman; so that we need have no hesitation in trusting his eyes.

2 *Aph.* As far as I am concerned, Zeus, Momus himself might be our judge; *I* should not be afraid to show myself. What fault could he find with *me*? But the others must agree too.

*Hera.* Oh, we are under no alarm, thank you,—though your admirer Ares should be appointed. But Paris will do; whoever Paris is.

*Zeus.* And my little Athene; have we her approval? Nay, never blush, nor hide your face. Well, well, maidens will be coy; 'tis a delicate subject. But there, she nods consent. Now, off with you; and mind, the beaten ones must not be cross with the judge; I will not have the poor lad harmed. The prize of beauty can be but one.

3 *Herm.* Now for Phrygia. I will show the way; keep close behind me, ladies, and don't be nervous. I know Paris well: he is a charming young man; a great gallant, and an admirable judge of beauty. Depend on it, he will make a good award.

*Aph.* I am glad to hear that; I ask for nothing better than a just judge.—Has he a wife, Hermes, or is he a bachelor?

*Herm.* Not exactly a bachelor.

*Aph.* What do you mean?

*Herm.* I believe there is a wife, as it were; a good enough sort of girl—a native of those parts—but sadly countrified! I fancy he does not care very much about her.—Why do you ask?

*Aph.* I just wanted to know.

4 *Ath.* Now, Hermes, that is not fair. No whispering with Aphrodite.

*Herm.* It was nothing, Athene; nothing about you. She only asked me whether Paris was a bachelor.

*Ath.* What business is that of hers?

*Herm.* None that I know of. She meant nothing by the question; she just wanted to know.

*Ath.* Well, and is he?

*Herm.* Why, no.

*Ath.* And does he care for military glory? has he ambition? or is he a *mere* neatherd?

*Herm.* I couldn't say for certain. But he is a young man, so it is to be presumed that distinction on the field of battle is among his desires.

*Aph.* There, you see; *I* don't complain; I say nothing when you whisper with *her*. Aphrodite is not so particular as some people.

*Herm.* Athene asked me almost exactly the same as you did; so don't be cross. It will do you no harm, my answering a plain question.—Meanwhile, we have left the stars far behind us, and are almost over Phrygia. There is Ida: I can make out the peak of Gargarum quite plainly; and if I am not mistaken, there is Paris himself.

*Hera.* Where is he? I don't see him.

*Herm.* Look over there to the left, Hera: not on the top, but down the side, by that cave where you see the herd.

*Hera.* But I *don't* see the herd.

*Herm.* What, don't you see them coming out from between the rocks,—where I am pointing, look—and the man running down from the crag, and keeping them together with his staff?

*Hera.* I see him now; if he it is.

*Herm.* Oh, that is Paris. But we are getting near; it is time to alight and walk. He might be frightened, if we were to descend upon him so suddenly.

*Hera.* Yes; very well. And now that we are on the earth, you might go on ahead, Aphrodite, and show us the way. You know the country, of course, having been here so often to see Anchises; or so I have heard.

*Aph.* Your sneers are thrown away on me, Hera.

6 *Herm.* Come; I'll lead the way myself. I spent some time on Ida, while Zeus was courting Ganymede. Many is the time that I have been sent here to keep watch over the boy; and when at last the eagle came, I flew by his side, and helped him with his lovely burden. This is the very rock, if I remember; yes, Ganymede was piping to his sheep, when down swooped the eagle behind him, and tenderly, oh, so tenderly, caught him up in those talons, and with the turban in his beak bore him off, the frightened boy straining his neck the while to see his captor. I picked up his pipes—he had dropped them in his fright—
7 and—ah! here is our umpire, close at hand. Let us accost him.—Good-morrow, herdsman!

*Par.* Good-morrow, youngster. And who may you be, who come thus far afield? And these dames? They are over comely, to be wandering on the mountain-side.

*Herm.* 'These dames,' good Paris, are Hera, Athene, and Aphrodite; and I am Hermes, with a message from Zeus. Why so pale and tremulous? Compose yourself; there is nothing the matter. Zeus appoints you the judge of their beauty. 'Because you are handsome, and wise in the things of love' (so runs the message), 'I leave the decision to you; and for the prize,—read the inscription on the apple.'

*Par.* Let me see what it is about. FOR THE FAIR, it says. But, my lord Hermes, how shall a mortal and a rustic like myself be judge of such unparalleled beauty? This is no sight for a herdsman's eyes; let the fine city folk decide on such matters. As for me, I can tell you which of two goats is the fairer beast; or I can judge betwixt heifer and heifer;—'tis my
8 trade. But here, where all are beautiful alike, I know not how a man may leave looking at one, to look upon another. Where my eyes fall, there they fasten,—for there is beauty: I move them, and what do I find? more loveliness! I am fixed again,

yet distracted by neighbouring charms. I bathe in beauty: I am enthralled: ah, why am I not *all* eyes like Argus? Methinks it were a fair award, to give the apple to all three. Then again: one is the wife and sister of Zeus; the others are his daughters. Take it where you will, 'tis a hard matter to judge.

*Herm.* So it is, Paris. At the same time—Zeus's orders! There is no way out of it.

*Par.* Well, please point out to them, Hermes, that the losers 9
must not be angry with me; the fault will be in my eyes only.

*Herm.* That is quite understood. And now to work.

*Par.* I must do what I can; there is no help for it. But first let me ask,—am I just to look at them as they are, or must I go into the matter thoroughly?

*Herm.* That is for you to decide, in virtue of your office. You have only to give your orders; it is as you think best.

*Par.* As I think best? Then I will be thorough.

*Herm.* Get ready, ladies. Now, Mr. Umpire.—I will look the other way.

*Hera.* I approve your decision, Paris. I will be the first to 10
submit myself to your inspection. You shall see that I have more to boast of than white arms and large eyes: nought of me but is beautiful.

*Par.* Aphrodite, will you also prepare?

*Ath.* Oh, Paris,—make her take off that girdle, first; there is magic in it; she will bewitch you. For that matter, she has no right to come thus tricked out and painted,—just like a courtesan! She ought to show herself unadorned.

*Par.* They are right about the girdle, madam; it must go.

*Aph.* Oh, very well, Athene: then take off that helmet, and show your head bare, instead of trying to intimidate the judge with that waving plume. I suppose you are afraid the colour of your eyes may be noticed, without their formidable surroundings.

*Ath.* Oh, here is my helmet.

*Aph.* And here is my girdle.

*Hera.* Now then.

11 *Par.* God of wonders! What loveliness is here! Oh, rapture! How exquisite these maiden charms! How dazzling the majesty of Heaven's true queen! And oh, how sweet, how enthralling is Aphrodite's smile! 'Tis too much, too much of happiness.—But perhaps it would be well for me to view each in detail; for as yet I doubt, and know not where to look; my eyes are drawn all ways at once.

*Aph.* Yes, that will be best.

*Par.* Withdraw then, you and Athene; and let Hera remain.

*Hera.* So be it; and when you have finished your scrutiny, you have next to consider, how you would like the present which I offer you. Paris, give me the prize of beauty, and you shall be lord of all Asia.

*Par.* I will take no presents. Withdraw I shall judge as
12 I think right. Approach, Athene.

*Ath.* Behold. And, Paris, if you will say that I am the fairest, I will make you a great warrior and conqueror, and you shall always win, in every one of your battles.

*Par.* But I have nothing to do with fighting, Athene. As you see, there is peace throughout all Lydia and Phrygia, and my father's dominion is uncontested. But never mind: I am not going to take your present, but you shall have fair play. You can robe again and put on your helmet; I have seen. And now for Aphrodite.

13 *Aph.* Here I am; take your time, and examine carefully; let nothing escape your vigilance. And I have something else to say to you, handsome Paris. Yes, you handsome boy, I have long had an eye on you; I think you must be the handsomest young fellow in all Phrygia. But it is such a pity that you don't leave these rocks and crags, and live in a town: you will lose all

your beauty in this desert. What have you to do with mountains? What satisfaction can your beauty give to a lot of cows? You ought to have been married long ago; not to any of these dowdy women hereabouts, but to some Greek girl; an Argive, perhaps, or a Corinthian, or a Spartan; Helen, now, is a Spartan, and such a pretty girl—quite as pretty as I am—and so susceptible! Why, if she once caught sight of *you*, she would give up everything, I am sure, to go with you, and a most devoted wife she would be. But you have heard of Helen, of course?

*Par.* No, ma'am; but I should like to hear all about her now.

*Aph.* Well, she is the daughter of Leda, the beautiful woman, 14
you know, whom Zeus visited in the disguise of a swan.

*Par.* And what is she like?

*Aph.* She is fair, as might be expected from the swan, soft as down (she was hatched from an egg, you know), and such a lithe, graceful figure; and only think, she is so much admired, that there was a war because Theseus ran away with her; and she was a mere child then. And when she grew up, the very first men in Greece were suitors for her hand, and she was given to Menelaus, who is descended from Pelops.—Now, if you like, she shall be your wife.

*Par.* What, when she is married already?

*Aph.* Tut, child, you are a simpleton: *I* understand these things.

*Par.* I should like to understand them too.

*Aph.* You will set out for Greece on a tour of inspection: 15
and when you get to Sparta, Helen will see you; and for the rest—her falling in love, and going back with you—that will be my affair.

*Par.* But that is what I cannot believe,—that she will forsake her husband to cross the seas with a stranger, a barbarian.

*Aph.* Trust me for that. I have two beautiful children,

Love and Desire. They shall be your guides. Love will assail her in all his might, and compel her to love you: Desire will encompass you about, and make you desirable and lovely as himself; and I will be there to help. I can get the Graces to come too, and between us we shall prevail.

*Par.* How this will end, I know not. All I do know is, that I am in love with Helen already. I see her before me—I sail for Greece—I am in Sparta—I am on my homeward journey, with her at my side! Ah, why is none of it true?

16 *Aph.* Wait. Do not fall in love yet. You have first to secure my interest with the bride, by your award. The union must be graced with my victorious presence: your marriage-feast shall be my feast of victory. Love, beauty, wedlock; all these you may purchase at the price of yonder apple.

*Par.* But perhaps after the award you will forget all about *me*?

*Aph.* Shall I swear?

*Par.* No; but promise once more.

*Aph.* I promise that you shall have Helen to wife; that she shall follow you, and make Troy her home; and I will be present with you, and help you in all.

*Par.* And bring Love, and Desire, and the Graces?

*Aph.* Assuredly; and Passion and Hymen as well.

*Par.* Take the apple: it is yours. F.

## XXI

*Ares. Hermes*

*Ar.* Did you hear Zeus's threat, Hermes? most complimentary, wasn't it, and most practicable? 'If I choose,' says he, 'I could let down a cord from Heaven, and all of you might hang on to it and do your very best to pull me down; it would be waste labour; you would never move me. On the other

hand, if I chose to haul up, I should have you all dangling in mid air, with earth and sea into the bargain '—and so on ; you heard ? Well, I dare say he *is* too much for any of us individually, but I will never believe he outweighs the whole of us in a body, or that, even with the makeweight of earth and sea, we should not get the better of him.

*Her.* Mind what you say, Ares ; it is not safe to talk like that ; we might get paid out for chattering.

*Ar.* You don't suppose I should say this to every one ; I am not afraid of you ; I know you can keep a quiet tongue. I *must* tell you what made me laugh most while he stormed : I remember not so long ago, when Posidon and Hera and Athene rebelled and made a plot for his capture and imprisonment, he was frightened out of his wits ; well, there were only three of them, and if Thetis had not taken pity on him and called in the hundred-handed Briareus to the rescue, he would actually have been put in chains, with his thunder and his bolt beside him. When I worked out the sum, I could not help laughing.

*Her.* Oh, do be quiet ; such things are too risky for you to say or me to listen to. H.

## XXIV

*Hermes. Maia*

*Her.* Mother, I am the most miserable god in Heaven.

*Ma.* Don't say such things, child.

*Her.* Am I to do all the work of Heaven with my own hands, to be hurried from one piece of drudgery to another, and never say a word ? I have to get up early, sweep the dining-room, lay the cushions and put all to rights : then I have to wait on Zeus, and take his messages, up and down, all day long : and I am no sooner back again (no time for a wash) than I have to lay the table ; and there was the nectar to pour out, too, till

this new cup-bearer was bought. And it really is too bad, that when every one else is in bed, I should have to go off to Pluto with the Shades, and play the usher in Rhadamanthus's court. It is not enough that I must be busy all day in the wrestling-ground and the Assembly and the schools of rhetoric, the dead must have their share in me too. Leda's sons take turn and turn about betwixt Heaven and Hades—*I* have to be in both every day. And why should the sons of Alcmena and Semele, paltry women, why should they feast at their ease, and I—the son of Maia, the grandson of Atlas—wait upon them? And now here am I only just back from Sidon, where he sent me to see after Europa, and before I am in breath again—off I must go to Argos, in quest of Danae, 'and you can take Boeotia on your way,' says father, 'and see Antiope.' I am half dead with it all. Mortal slaves are better off than I am: they have the chance of being sold to a new master; I wish I had the same!

*Ma.* Come, come, child. You must do as your father bids you, like a good boy. Run along now to Argos and Boeotia; don't loiter, or you will get a whipping. Lovers are apt to be hasty. F.

## XXV

*Zeus. Helius*

*Zeus.* What have you been about, you villanous Titan? You have utterly done for the earth, trusting your car to a silly boy like that; he has got too near and scorched it in one place, and in another killed everything with frost by withdrawing the heat too far; there is not a single thing he has not turned upside down; if I had not seen what was happening and upset him with the thunderbolt, there would not have been a remnant of mankind left. A pretty deputy driver!

*Hel.* I was wrong, Zeus; but do not be angry with me; my

boy pressed me so; how could I tell it would turn out so badly?

*Zeus.* Oh, of course you didn't know what a delicate business it is, and how the slightest divergence ruins everything! it never occurred to you that the horses are spirited, and want a tight hand! oh no! why, give them their heads a moment, and they are out of control; just what happened: they carried him now left, now right, now clean round backwards, and up or down, just at their own sweet will; he was utterly helpless.

*Hel.* I knew it all; I held out for a long time and told him he mustn't drive. But he wept and entreated, and his mother Clymene joined in, and at last I put him up. I showed him how to stand, and how far he was to mount upwards, and where to begin descending, and how to hold the reins, and keep the spirited beasts under control; and I told him how dangerous it was, if he did not keep the track. But, poor boy, when he found himself in charge of all that fire, and looking down into yawning space, he was frightened, and no wonder; and the horses soon knew I was not behind them, took the child's measure, left the track, and wrought all this havoc; he let go the reins—I suppose he was afraid of being thrown out—and held on to the rail. But he has suffered for it, and my grief is punishment enough for me, Zeus.

*Zeus.* Punishment enough, indeed! after daring to do such a thing as that!—Well, I forgive you this time. But if ever you transgress again, or send another substitute like him, I will show you how much hotter the thunderbolt is than your fire. Let his sisters bury him by the Eridanus, where he was upset. They shall weep amber tears and be changed by their grief into poplars. As for you, repair the car—the pole is broken, and one of the wheels crushed—, put the horses to and drive yourself. And let this be a lesson to you. H.

## XXVI

*Apollo. Hermes*

*Ap.* Hermes, have you any idea which of those two is Castor, and which is Pollux? I never can make out.

*Her.* It was Castor yesterday, and Pollux to-day.

*Ap.* How do you tell? They are exactly alike.

*Her.* Why, Pollux's face is scarred with the wounds he got in boxing; those that Amycus, the Bebrycian, gave him, when he was on that expedition with Jason, are particularly noticeable. Castor has no marks; his face is all right.

*Ap.* Good; I am glad I know that. Everything else is the same for both. Each has his half egg-shell, with the star on top, each his javelin and his white horse. I am always calling Pollux Castor, and Castor Pollux. And, by the way, why are they never both here together? Why should they be alternately gods and shades?

*Her.* That is their brotherly way. You see, it was decreed that one of the sons of Leda must die, and the other be immortal; and by this arrangement they split the immortality between them.

*Ap.* Rather a stupid way of doing it: if one of them is to be in Heaven, whilst the other is underground, they will never see one another at all; and I suppose that is just what they wanted to do. Then again: all the other gods practise some useful profession, either here or on earth; for instance, I am a prophet, Asclepius is a doctor, you are a first-rate gymnast and trainer, Artemis ushers children into the world; now what are these two going to do? surely two such great fellows are not to have a lazy time of it?

*Her.* Oh no. Their business is to wait upon Posidon, and ride the waves; and if they see a ship in distress, they go aboard of her, and save the crew.

*Ap.* A most humane profession.

# DIALOGUES OF THE SEA-GODS

## I

*Doris. Galatea*

*Dor.* A handsome lover, Galatea, this Sicilian shepherd who they say is so mad for you!

*Gal.* Don't be sarcastic, Doris; he is Posidon's son, after all.

*Dor.* Well, and if he were Zeus's, and still such a wild shaggy creature, with only one eye (there is nothing uglier than to have only one eye), do you think his birth would improve his beauty?

*Gal.* Shagginess and wildness, as you call them, are not ugly in a man; and his eye looks very well in the middle of his forehead, and sees just as well as if it were two.

*Dor.* Why, my dear, from your raptures about him one would think it was you that were in love, not he.

*Gal.* Oh no, I am not in love; but it is too bad, your all running him down as you do. It is my belief you are jealous. Do you remember? we were playing on the shore at the foot of Etna, where the long strip of beach comes between the mountain and the sea; he was feeding his sheep, and spied us from above; yes, but he never so much as glanced at the rest of you; I was the pretty one; he was all eyes—eye, I mean—for me. That is what makes you spiteful, because it showed I was better than you, good enough to be loved, while you were taken no notice of.

*Dor.* Hoity-toity! jealous indeed! because a one-eyed shepherd thinks you pretty! Why, what could he see in you but your white skin? and he only cared for that because it reminded him of cheese and milk; he thinks everything pretty that is like them. If you want to know any more than that about your

looks, sit on a rock when it is calm, and lean over the water; just a bit of white skin, that is all; and who cares for that, if it is not picked out with some red?

*Gal.* Well, if I *am* all white, I have got a lover of some sort; there is not a shepherd or a sailor or a boatman to care for any of you. Besides, Polyphemus is very musical.

*Dor.* Take care, dear; we heard him singing the other day when he serenaded you. Heavens! one would have taken him for an ass braying. And his lyre! what a thing! A stag's skull, with its horns for the uprights; he put a bar across, and fastened on the strings without any tuning-pegs! then came the performance, all harsh and out of tune; he shouted something himself, and the lyre played something else, and the love ditty sent us into fits of laughter. Why, Echo, chatterbox that she is, would not answer him; she was ashamed to be caught mimicking such a rough ridiculous song. Oh, and the pet that your beau brought you in his arms!—a bear cub nearly as shaggy as himself. Now then, Galatea, do you still think we envy you your lover?

*Gal.* Well, Doris, only show us your own; no doubt he is much handsomer, and sings and plays far better.

*Dor.* Oh, I have not got one; *I* do not set up to be lovely. But one like the Cyclops—faugh, he might be one of his own goats!—he eats raw meat, they say, and feeds on travellers—one like him, dear, you may keep; I wish you nothing worse than to return his love. H.

## II

*Cyclops. Posidon*

*Cy.* Only look, father, what that cursed stranger has been doing to me! He made me drunk, and set upon me whilst I was asleep, and blinded me.

*Po.* Who has dared to do this ?

*Cy.* He called himself 'Noman' at first: but when he had got safely out of range, he said his name was Odysseus.

*Po.* I know—the Ithacan; on his way back from Troy. But how did he come to do such a thing ? He is not distinguished for courage.

*Cy.* When I got back from the pasture, I caught a lot of the fellows in my cave. Evidently they had designs upon the sheep: because when I had blocked up my doorway (I have a great big stone for that), and kindled a fire, with a tree that I had brought home from the mountain,—there they were trying to hide themselves. I saw they were robbers, so I caught a few of them, and ate them of course, and then that scoundrel of a Noman, or Odysseus, whichever it is, gave me something to drink, with a drug in it; it tasted and smelt very good, but it was villanously heady stuff; it made everything spin round; even the cave seemed to be turning upside down, and I simply didn't know where I was; and finally I fell off to sleep. And then he sharpened that stake, and made it hot in the fire, and blinded me in my sleep; and blind I have been ever since, father.

*Po.* You must have slept pretty soundly, my boy, or you would have jumped up in the middle of it. Well, and how did Odysseus get off ? He couldn't move that stone away, *I* know.

*Cy.* I took that away myself, so as to catch him as he went out. I sat down in the doorway, and felt about for him with my hands. I just let the sheep go out to pasture, and told the ram everything I wanted done.

*Po.* Ah ! and they slipped out under the sheep ? But you should have set the other Cyclopes on to him.

*Cy.* I did call them, and they came: but when they asked me who it was that was playing tricks with me, I said 'Noman'; and then they thought I was mad, and went off home again.

The villain! that name of his was just a trick! And what I minded most was the way in which he made game of my misfortune: 'Not even Papa can put this right,' he said.

*Po.* Never mind, my boy; I will be even with him. I may not be able to cure blindness, but he shall know that I have something to say to mariners. He is not home yet. F.

## III

*Posidon. Alpheus*

*Pos.* What is the meaning of this, Alpheus? unlike others, when you take your plunge you do not mingle with the brine as a river should; you do not put an end to your labours by dispersing; you hold together through the sea, keep your current fresh, and hurry along in all your original purity; you dive down to strange depths like a gull or a heron; I suppose you will come to the top again and show yourself somewhere or other.

*Al.* Do not press me, Posidon; a love affair; and many is the time you have been in love yourself.

*Pos.* Woman, nymph, or Nereid?

*Al.* All wrong; she is a fountain.

*Pos.* A fountain? and where does she flow?

*Al.* She is an islander—in Sicily. Her name is Arethusa.

*Pos.* Ah, I commend your taste. She is pellucid, and bubbles up in perfect purity; the water as bright over her pebbles as if it were a mass of silver.

*Al.* You know my fountain, Posidon, and no mistake. It is to her that I go.

*Pos.* Go, then; and may the course of love run smooth! But pray where did you meet her? Arcadia and Syracuse, you know!

*Al.* I am in a hurry; you are detaining me, with these superfluous questions.

*Pos.* Ah, so I am. Be off to your beloved, rise from the sea, mingle your channels and be one water. H.

## IV

*Menelaus. Proteus*

*Me.* I can understand your turning into *water*, you know, Proteus, because you *are* a sea-god. I can even pass the tree; and the lion is not wholly beyond the bounds of belief. But the idea of your being able to turn into *fire*, living under water as you do,—this excites my surprise, not to say my incredulity.

*Pro.* Don't let it; because I can.

*Me.* I have seen you do it. But (to be frank with you) I think there must be some deception; you play tricks with one's eyes; you don't really turn into anything of the kind?

*Pro.* Deception? What deception can there possibly be? Everything is above-board. Your eyes were open, I suppose, and you saw me change into all these things? If that is not enough for you, if you think it is a fraud, an optical illusion, I will turn into fire again, and you can touch me with your hand, my sagacious friend. You will then be able to conclude whether I am only visible fire, or have the additional property of burning.

*Me.* That would be rash.

*Pro.* I suppose you have never seen such a thing as a polypus, nor observed the proceedings of that fish?

*Me.* I have seen them; as to their proceedings, I shall be glad of your information.

*Pro.* The polypus, having selected his rock, and attached himself by means of his suckers, assimilates himself to it, changing his colour to match that of the rock. By this means he

hopes to escape the observation of fishermen: there is no contrast of colour to betray his presence; he looks just like stone.

*Me.* So I have heard. But yours is quite another matter, Proteus.

*Pro.* I don't know what evidence would satisfy you, if you reject that of your own eyes.

*Me.* I have seen it done, but it is an extraordinary business; fire and water, one and the same person! F.

## V

*Panope. Galene*

*Pa.* Galene, did you see what Eris did yesterday at the Thessalian banquet, because she had not had an invitation?

*Ga.* No, I was not with you; Posidon had told me to keep the sea quiet for the occasion. What did Eris do, then, if she was not there?

*Pa.* Thetis and Peleus had just gone off to the bridal chamber, conducted by Amphitrite and Posidon, when Eris came in unnoticed—which was easy enough; some were drinking, some dancing, or attending to Apollo's lyre or the Muses' songs—well, she threw down a lovely apple, solid gold, my dear; and there was written on it, FOR THE FAIR. It rolled along as if it knew what it was about, till it came in front of Hera, Aphrodite, and Athene. Hermes picked it up and read out the inscription; of course we Nereids kept quiet; what should *we* do in such company? But they all made for it, each insisting that it was hers; and if Zeus had not parted them, there would have been a battle. He would not decide the matter himself, though they asked him to. 'Go, all of you, to Ida,' he said, 'to the son of Priam; he is a man of taste, quite capable of picking out the beauty; he will be no bad judge.'

*Ga.* Yes, and the Goddesses, Panope?

*Pa.* They are going to Ida to-day, I believe; we shall soon have news of the result.

*Ga.* Oh, I can tell you that now; if the umpire is not a blind man, no one else can win, with Aphrodite in for it.

H.

## VI

*Triton. Posidon. Amymone*

*Tri.* Posidon, there is such a pretty girl coming to Lerna for water every day; I don't know that I ever saw a prettier.

*Pos.* What is she, a lady? or a mere water-carrier?

*Tri.* Oh no; she is one of the fifty daughters of that Egyptian king. Her name is Amymone; I asked about that and her family. Danaus understands discipline; he is bringing them up to do everything for themselves; they have to fetch water, and make themselves generally useful.

*Pos.* And does she come all that way by herself, from Argos to Lerna?

*Tri.* Yes; and Argos, you know, is a thirsty place; she is always having to get water.

*Pos.* Triton, this is most exciting. We must go and see her.

*Tri.* Very well. It is just her time now; I reckon she will be about half-way to Lerna.

*Pos.* Bring out the chariot, then. Or no; it takes such a time getting it ready, and putting the horses to. Just fetch me out a good fast dolphin; that will be quickest.

*Tri.* Here is a racer for you.

*Pos.* Good; now let us be off. You swim alongside.—Here we are at Lerna. I'll lie in ambush hereabouts; and you keep a look-out. When you see her coming——

*Tri.* Here she comes.

*Pos.* A charming child; the dawn of loveliness. We must carry her off.

*Am.* Villain! where are you taking me to? You are a kidnapper. I know who sent you—my uncle Aegyptus. I shall call my father.

*Tri.* Hush, Amymone; it is Posidon.

*Am.* Posidon? What do you mean? Unhand me, villain! would you drag me into the sea? Help, help, I shall sink and be drowned.

*Pos.* Don't be frightened; no harm shall be done to you. Come, you shall have a fountain called after you; it shall spring up in this very place, near the waves; I will strike the rock with my trident.—Think how nice it will be being dead, and not having to carry water any more, like all your sisters. F.

## VII

*South Wind. West Wind*

*S.* Zephyr, is it true about Zeus and the heifer that Hermes is convoying across the sea to Egypt?—that he fell in love with it?

*W.* Certainly. She was not a heifer then, though, but a daughter of the river Inachus. Hera made her what she is now; Zeus was so deep in love that Hera was jealous.

*S.* And is he still in love, now that she is a cow?

*W.* Oh, yes; that is why he has sent her to Egypt, and told us not to stir up the sea till she has swum across; she is to be delivered there of her child, and both of them are to be Gods.

*S.* The heifer a God?

*W.* Yes, I tell you. And Hermes said she was to be the patroness of sailors and our mistress, and send out or confine any of us that she chooses.

*S.* So we must regard ourselves as her servants at once ?

*W.* Why, yes ; she will be the kinder if we do. Ah, she has got across and landed. Do you see ? she does not go on four legs now ; Hermes has made her stand erect, and turned her back into a beautiful woman.

*S.* This is most remarkable, Zephyr ; no horns, no tail, no cloven hoofs ; instead, a lovely maid. But what is the matter with Hermes ? he has changed his handsome face into a dog's.

*W.* We had better not meddle ; he knows his own business best. H.

## VIII

*Posidon. Dolphins*

*Pos.* Well done, Dolphins !—humane as ever. Not content with your former exploit, when Ino leapt with Melicertes from the Scironian cliff, and you picked the boy up and conveyed him to the Isthmus, one of you swims from Methymna to Taenarum with this musician on his back, mantle and lyre and all. Those sailors had almost had their wicked will of him ; but you were not going to stand that.

*Dol.* You need not be surprised to find us doing a good turn to a man, Posidon ; we were men before we were fishes.

*Pos.* Yes ; I think it was too bad of Dionysus to celebrate his victory by such a transformation scene ; he might have been content with adding you to the roll of his subjects.—Well, Dolphin, tell me all about Arion.

*Dol.* From what I can gather, Periander was very fond of him, and was always sending for him to perform ; till Arion grew quite rich at his expense, and thought he would take a trip to Methymna, and show off his wealth at home. He took ship accordingly ; but it was with a crew of rogues. He had made no secret of the gold and silver he had with him ; and

when they were in mid Aegean, the sailors rose against him. As I was swimming alongside, I heard all that went on. 'Since your minds are made up,' says Arion, 'at least let me get my mantle on, and sing my own dirge; and then I will throw myself into the sea of my own accord.'—The sailors agreed. He threw his minstrel's cloak about him, and sang a most sweet melody; and then he let himself drop into the water, never doubting but that his last moment had come. But I caught him up on my back, and swam to shore with him at Taenarum.

*Pos.* I am glad to find you a patron of the arts. This was handsome pay for a song. F.

## IX

*Posidon. Amphitrite and other Nereids*

*Pos.* The strait where the child fell shall be called Hellespont after her. And as for her body, you Nereids shall take it to the Troad to be buried by the inhabitants.

*Amph.* Oh no, Posidon. Let her grave be the sea which bears her name. We are so sorry for her; that step-mother's treatment of her was shocking.

*Pos.* No, my dear, that may not be. And indeed it is not desirable that she should lie here under the sand; her grave shall be in the Troad, as I said, or in the Chersonese. It will be no small consolation to her that Ino will have the same fate before long. She will be chased by Athamas from the top of Cithaeron down the ridge which runs into the sea, and there plunge in with her son in her arms. But her we must rescue, to please Dionysus; Ino was his nurse and suckled him, you know.

*Amph.* Rescue a wicked creature like her?

*Pos.* Well, we do not want to disoblige Dionysus.

*Nereid.* I wonder what made the poor child fall off the ram; her brother Phrixus held on all right.

*Pos.* Of course he did; a lusty youth equal to the flight; but it was all too strange for her; sitting on that queer mount, looking down on yawning space, terrified, overpowered by the heat, giddy with the speed, she lost her hold on the ram's horns, and down she came into the sea.

*Nereid.* Surely her mother Nephele should have broken her fall.

*Pos.* I dare say; but Fate is a great deal too strong for Nephele. H.

## X

*Iris. Posidon*

*Ir.* Posidon: you know that floating island, that was torn away from Sicily, and is still drifting about under water; you are to bring it to the surface, Zeus says, and fix it well in view in the middle of the Aegean; and mind it is properly secured; he has a use for it.

*Pos.* Very good. And when I have got it up, and anchored it, what is he going to do with it?

*Ir.* Leto is to lie in there; her time is near.

*Pos.* And is there no room in Heaven? Or is Earth too small to hold her children?

*Ir.* Ah, you see, Hera has bound the Earth by a great oath not to give shelter to Leto in her travail. This island, however, being out of sight, has not committed itself.

*Pos.* I see.—Island, be still! Rise once more from the depths; and this time there must be no sinking. Henceforth you are *terra firma*; it will be your happiness to receive my brother's twin children, fairest of the Gods.—Tritons, you will have to convey Leto across. Let all be calm.—As to that

serpent who is frightening her out of her senses, wait till these children are born; they will soon avenge their mother.—You can tell Zeus that all is ready. Delos stands firm: Leto has only to come. F.

## XI

*The Xanthus. The Sea*

*Xan.* O Sea, take me to you; see how horribly I have been treated; cool my wounds for me.

*Sea.* What is this, Xanthus? who has burned you?

*Xan.* Hephaestus. Oh, I am burned to cinders! oh, oh, oh, I boil!

*Sea.* What made him use his fire upon you?

*Xan.* Why, it was all that son of your Thetis. He was slaughtering the Phrygians; I tried entreaties, but he went raging on, damming my stream with their bodies; I was so sorry for the poor wretches, I poured down to see if I could make a flood and frighten him off them. But Hephaestus happened to be about, and he must have collected every particle of fire he had in Etna or anywhere else; on he came at me, scorched my elms and tamarisks, baked the poor fishes and eels, made me boil over, and very nearly dried me up altogether. You see what a state I am in with the burns.

*Sea.* Indeed you are thick and hot, Xanthus, and no wonder; the dead men's blood accounts for one, and the fire for the other, according to your story. Well, and serve you right; assaulting my grandson, indeed! paying no more respect to the son of a Nereid than that!

*Xan.* Was I not to take compassion on the Phrygians? they are my neighbours.

*Sea.* And was Hephaestus not to take compassion on Achilles? he is the son of Thetis. H.

## XII

*Doris. Thetis*

*Dor.* Crying, dear?

*The.* Oh, Doris, I have just seen a lovely girl thrown into a chest by her father, and her little baby with her; and he gave the chest to some sailors, and told them, as soon as they were far enough from the shore, to drop it into the water; he meant them to be drowned, poor things.

*Dor.* Oh, sister, but why? What was it all about? Did you hear?

*The.* Her father, Acrisius, wanted to keep her from marrying. And, as she was so pretty, he shut her up in an iron room. And —I don't know whether it's true—but they say that Zeus turned himself into gold, and came showering down through the roof, and she caught the gold in her lap,—and it was Zeus all the time. And then her father found out about it—he is a horrid, jealous old man—and he was furious, and thought she had been receiving a lover; and he put her into the chest, the moment the child was born.

*Dor.* And what did she do then?

*The.* She never said a word against her own sentence; *she* was ready to submit: but she pleaded hard for the child's life, and cried, and held him up for his grandfather to see; and there was the sweet babe, that thought no harm, smiling at the waves. I am beginning again, at the mere remembrance of it.

*Dor.* You make me cry, too. And is it all over?

*The.* No; the chest has carried them safely so far; it is by Seriphus.

*Dor.* Then why should we not save them? We can put the

chest into those fishermen's nets, look; and then of course they will be hauled in, and come safe to shore.

*The.* The very thing. She shall not die; nor the child, sweet treasure! F.

## XIV

*Triton. Iphianassa. Doris. Nereids*

*Tri.* Well, ladies: so the monster you sent against the daughter of Cepheus has got killed himself, and never done Andromeda any harm at all!

*Nereid.* Who did it? I suppose Cepheus was just using his daughter as a bait, and had a whole army waiting in ambush to kill him?

*Tri.* No, no.—Iphianassa, you remember Perseus, Danae's boy?—they were both thrown into the sea by the boy's grandfather, in that chest, you know, and you took pity on them.

*Iph.* I know; why, I suppose he is a fine handsome young fellow by now?

*Tri.* It was he who killed your monster.

*Iph.* But why? This was not the way to show his gratitude.

*Tri.* I'll tell you all about it. The king had sent him on this expedition against the Gorgons, and when he got to Libya—

*Iph.* How did he get there? all by himself? he must have had some one to help him?—it is a dangerous journey otherwise.

*Tri.* He flew,—Athene gave him wings.—Well, so when he got to where the Gorgons were living, he caught them napping, I suppose, cut off Medusa's head, and flew away.

*Iph.* How could he see them? The Gorgons are a forbidden sight. Whoever looks at them will never look at any one else again.

*Tri.* Athene held up her shield—I heard him telling Andro-

meda and Cepheus about it afterwards—Athene showed him the reflection of the Gorgon in her shield, which is as bright as any mirror; so he took hold of her hair in his left hand, grasped his scimetar with the right, still looking at the reflection, cut off her head, and was off before her sisters woke up. Lowering his flight as he reached the Ethiopian coast yonder, he caught sight of Andromeda, fettered to a jutting rock, her hair hanging loose about her shoulders; ye Gods, what loveliness was there exposed to view! And first pity of her hard fate prompted him to ask the cause of her doom: but Fate had decreed the maiden's deliverance, and presently Love stole upon him, and he resolved to save her. The hideous monster now drew near, and would have swallowed her: but the youth, hovering above, smote him with the drawn scimetar in his right hand, and with his left uncovered the petrifying Gorgon's head: in one moment the monster was lifeless; all of him that had met that gaze was turned to stone. Then Perseus released the maiden from her fetters, and supported her, as with timid steps she descended from the slippery rock.—And now he is to marry her in Cepheus's palace, and take her home to Argos; so that where she looked for death, she has found an uncommonly good match.

*Iph.* I am not sorry to hear it. It is no fault of hers, if her mother has the vanity to set up for our rival.

*Dor.* Still, she *is* Andromeda's mother; and we should have had our revenge on her through the daughter.

*Iph.* My dear, let bygones be bygones. What matter if a barbarian queen's tongue runs away with her? She is sufficiently punished by the fright. So let us take this marriage in good part.

## XV

*West Wind. South Wind*

*W.* Such a splendid pageant I never saw on the waves, since the day I first blew. You were not there, Notus ?

*S.* Pageant, Zephyr ? what pageant ? and whose ?

*W.* You missed a most ravishing spectacle; such another chance you are not likely to have.

*S.* I was busy with the Red Sea; and I gave the Indian coasts a little airing too. So I don't know what you are talking about.

*W.* Well, you know Agenor the Sidonian ?

*S.* Europa's father ? what of him ?

*W.* Europa it is that I am going to tell you about.

*S.* You need not tell me that Zeus has been in love with her this long while; that is stale news.

*W.* We can pass the love, then, and get on to the sequel.

Europa had come down for a frolic on the beach with her playfellows. Zeus transformed himself into a bull, and joined the game. A fine sight he was—spotless white skin, crumpled horns, and gentle eyes. He gambolled on the shore with them, bellowing most musically, till Europa took heart of grace and mounted him. No sooner had she done it than, with her on his back, Zeus made off at a run for the sea, plunged in, and began swimming; she was dreadfully frightened, but kept her seat by clinging to one of his horns with her left hand, while the right held her skirt down against the puffs of wind.

*S.* A lovely sight indeed, Zephyr, in every sense—Zeus swimming with his darling on his back.

*W.* Ay, but what followed was lovelier far.

Every wave fell; the sea donned her robe of peace to speed them on their way; we winds made holiday and joined the

train, all eyes ; fluttering Loves skimmed the waves, just dipping now and again a heedless toe—in their hands lighted torches, on their lips the nuptial song ; up floated Nereids—few but were prodigal of naked charms—and clapped their hands, and kept pace on dolphin steeds ; the Triton company, with every sea-creature that frights not the eye, tripped it around the maid ; for Posidon on his car, with Amphitrite by him, led them in festal mood, ushering his brother through the waves. But, crowning all, a Triton pair bore Aphrodite, reclined on a shell, heaping the bride with all flowers that blow.

So went it from Phoenice even to Crete. But, when he set foot on the isle, behold, the bull was no more ; 'twas Zeus that took Europa's hand and led her to the Dictaean Cave—blushing and downward-eyed ; for she knew now the end of her bringing.

But we plunged this way and that, and roused the still seas anew.

*S.* Ah me, what sights of bliss ! and I was looking at griffins, and elephants, and blackamoors ! H.

# DIALOGUES OF THE DEAD

## I

*Diogenes. Pollux*

*Diog.* Pollux, I have a commission for you; next time you go up—and I think it is your turn for earth to-morrow—if you come across Menippus the Cynic—you will find him about the Craneum at Corinth, or in the Lyceum, laughing at the philosophers' disputes—well, give him this message:—Menippus, Diogenes advises you, if mortal subjects for laughter begin to pall, to come down below, and find much richer material; where you are now, there is always a dash of uncertainty in it; the question will always intrude—who can be quite sure about the hereafter? Here, you can have your laugh out in security, like me; it is the best of sport to see millionaires, governors, despots, now mean and insignificant; you can only tell them by their lamentations, and the spiritless despondency which is the legacy of better days. Tell him this, and mention that he had better stuff his wallet with plenty of lupines, and any unconsidered trifles he can snap up in the way of pauper doles [1] or lustral eggs [2].

*Pol.* I will tell him, Diogenes. But give me some idea of his appearance.

*Diog.* Old, bald, with a cloak that allows him plenty of light

[1] In the Greek, 'a Hecate's repast lying at a street corner.' 'Rich men used to make offerings to Hecate on the 30th of every month as Goddess of roads at street corners; and these offerings were at once pounced upon by the poor, or, as here, the Cynics.' *Jacobitz.*

[2] 'Eggs were often used as purificatory offerings and set out in front of the house purified.' *Id.*

and ventilation, and is patched all colours of the rainbow; always laughing, and usually gibing at pretentious philosophers.

*Pol.* Ah, I cannot mistake him now.

*Diog.* May I give you another message to those same philosophers?

*Pol.* Oh, I don't mind; go on.

*Diog.* Charge them generally to give up playing the fool, quarrelling over metaphysics, tricking each other with horn and crocodile puzzles [1], and teaching people to waste wit on such absurdities.

*Pol.* Oh, but if I say anything against their wisdom, they will call me an ignorant blockhead.

*Diog.* Then tell them from me to go to the devil.

*Pol.* Very well; rely upon me.

*Diog.* And then, my most obliging of Polluxes, there is this for the rich:—O vain fools, why hoard gold? why all these pains over interest sums and the adding of hundred to hundred, when you must shortly come to us with nothing beyond the dead-penny?

*Pol.* They shall have their message too.

*Diog.* Ah, and a word to the handsome and strong; Megillus of Corinth, and Damoxenus the wrestler will do. Inform them that auburn locks, eyes bright or black, rosy cheeks, are as little in fashion here as tense muscles or mighty shoulders; man and man are as like as two peas, tell them, when it comes to bare skull and no beauty.

*Pol.* That is to the handsome and strong; yes, I can manage that.

*Diog.* Yes, my Spartan, and here is for the poor. There are a great many of them, very sorry for themselves and resentful of their helplessness. Tell them to dry their tears and cease their cries; explain to them that here one man is as good as

[1] See *Puzzles* in Notes.

another, and they will find those who were rich on earth no better than themselves. As for your Spartans, you will not mind scolding them, from me, upon their present degeneracy ?

*Pol.* No, no, Diogenes ; leave Sparta alone ; that is going too far ; your other commissions I will execute.

*Diog.* Oh, well, let them off, if you care about it ; but tell all the others what I said. H.

## II

*Before Pluto : Croesus, Midas, and Sardanapalus* v. *Menippus*

*Cr.* Pluto, we can stand this snarling Cynic no longer in our neighbourhood ; either you must transfer him to other quarters, or we are going to migrate.

*Pl.* Why, what harm does he do to your ghostly community ?

*Cr.* Midas here, and Sardanapalus and I, can never get in a good cry over the old days of gold and luxury and treasure, but he must be laughing at us, and calling us rude names ; 'slaves' and 'garbage,' he says we are. And then he sings ; and that throws us out.—In short, he is a nuisance.

*Pl.* Menippus, what's this I hear ?

*Me.* All perfectly true, Pluto. I detest these abject rascals! Not content with having lived the abominable lives they did, they keep on talking about it now they are dead, and harping on the good old days. I take a positive pleasure in annoying them.

*Pl.* Yes, but you mustn't. They have had terrible losses ; they feel it deeply.

*Me.* Pluto ! you are not going to lend *your* countenance to these whimpering fools ?

*Pl.* It isn't that : but I won't have you quarrelling.

*Me.* Well, you scum of your respective nations, let there be no misunderstanding : I am going on just the same. Wherever

you are, there shall I be also; worrying, jeering, singing you down.

*Cr.* Presumption!

*Me.* Not a bit of it. Yours was the presumption, when you expected men to fall down before you, when you trampled on men's liberty, and forgot there was such a thing as death. Now comes the weeping and gnashing of teeth: for all is lost!

*Cr.* Lost! Ah God! My treasure-heaps——

*Mid.* My gold——

*Sar.* My little comforts——

*Me.* That's right: stick to it! You do the whining, and I'll chime in with a string of GNOTHI-SAUTONS, best of accompaniments. F.

## III

*Menippus. Amphilochus. Trophonius*

*Me.* Now I wonder how it is that you two dead men have been honoured with temples and taken for prophets; those silly mortals imagine you are Gods.

*Amp.* How can we help it, if they are fools enough to have such fancies about the dead?

*Me.* Ah, they would never have had them, though, if you had not been charlatans in your lifetime, and pretended to know the future and be able to foretell it to your clients.

*Tro.* Well, Menippus, Amphilochus can take his own line, if he likes; as for me, I *am* a Hero, and *do* give oracles to any one who comes down to me. It is pretty clear you were never at Lebadea, or you would not be so incredulous.

*Me.* What do you mean? I must go to Lebadea, swaddle myself up in absurd linen, take a cake in my hand, and crawl through a narrow passage into a cave, before I could tell that you are a dead man, with nothing but knavery to differentiate

you from the rest of us? Now, on your seer-ship, what *is* a Hero? I am sure *I* don't know.

*Tro.* He is half God, and half man.

*Me.* So what is neither man (as you imply) nor God, is both at once? Well, at present what has become of your diviner half?

*Tro.* He gives oracles in Boeotia.

*Me.* What you may mean is quite beyond me; the one thing I know for certain is that you are dead—the whole of you.

H.

## IV

*Hermes. Charon*

*Her.* Ferryman, what do you say to settling up accounts? It will prevent any unpleasantness later on.

*Ch.* Very good. It does save trouble to get these things straight.

*Her.* One anchor, to your order, five shillings.

*Ch.* That is a lot of money.

*Her.* So help me Pluto, it is what I had to pay. One row-lock-strap, fourpence.

*Ch.* Five and four; put that down.

*Her.* Then there was a needle, for mending the sail; tenpence.

*Ch.* Down with it.

*Her.* Caulking-wax; nails; and cord for the brace. Two shillings the lot.

*Ch.* They were worth the money.

*Her.* That's all; unless I have forgotten anything. When will you pay it?

*Ch.* I can't just now, Hermes; we shall have a war or a plague presently, and then the passengers will come shoaling in, and I shall be able to make a little by jobbing the fares.

*Her.* So for the present I have nothing to do but sit down, and pray for the worst, as my only chance of getting paid ?

*Ch.* There is nothing else for it;—very little business doing just now, as you see, owing to the peace.

*Her.* That is just as well, though it does keep me waiting for my money. After all, though, Charon, in old days men were men; you remember the state they used to come down in,—all blood and wounds generally. Nowadays, a man is poisoned by his slave or his wife; or gets dropsy from overfeeding; a pale, spiritless lot, nothing like the men of old. Most of them seem to meet their end in some plot that has money for its object.

*Ch.* Ah; money is in great request.

*Her.* Yes; you can't blame me if I am somewhat urgent for payment. F.

## V

*Pluto. Hermes*

*Pl.* You know that old, old fellow, Eucrates the millionaire—no children, but a few thousand would-be heirs ?

*Her.* Yes—lives at Sicyon. Well ?

*Pl.* Well, Hermes, he is ninety now; let him live as much longer, please; I should like it to be more still, if possible; and bring me down his toadies one by one, that young Charinus, Damon, and the rest of them.

*Her.* It would seem so strange, wouldn't it ?

*Pl.* On the contrary, it would be ideal justice. What business have they to pray for his death, or pretend to his money ? they are no relations. The most abominable thing about it is that they vary these prayers with every public attention; when he is ill, every one knows what they are after, and yet they vow offerings if he recovers; talk of versatility ! So let

him be immortal, and bring them away before him with their mouths still open for the fruit that never drops.

*Her.* Well, they *are* rascals, and it would be a comic ending. He leads them a pretty life too, on hope gruel; he always looks more dead than alive, but he is tougher than a young man. They have divided up the inheritance among them, and feed on imaginary bliss.

*Pl.* Just so; now he is to throw off his years like Iolaus, and rejuvenate, while they in the middle of their hopes find themselves here with their dream-wealth left behind them. Nothing like making the punishment fit the crime.

*Her.* Say no more, Pluto; I will fetch you them one after another; seven of them, is it?

*Pl.* Down with them; and he shall change from an old man to a blooming youth, and attend their funerals. H.

## VI

*Terpsion. Pluto*

*Ter.* Now is this fair, Pluto,—that I should die at the age of thirty, and that old Thucritus go on living past ninety?

*Pl.* Nothing could be fairer. Thucritus lives and is in no hurry for his neighbours to die; whereas you always had some design against him; you were waiting to step into his shoes.

*Ter.* Well, an old man like that is past getting any enjoyment out of his money; he ought to die, and make room for younger men.

*Pl.* This is a novel principle: the man who can no longer derive pleasure from his money is to die!—Fate and Nature have ordered it otherwise.

*Ter.* Then they have ordered it wrongly. There ought to be a proper sequence according to seniority. Things are turned upside down, if an old man is to go on living with only three

teeth in his head, half blind, tottering about with a pair of slaves on each side to hold him up, drivelling and rheumy-eyed, having no joy of life, a living tomb, the derision of his juniors,—and young men are to die in the prime of their strength and beauty. 'Tis contrary to nature. At any rate the young men have a right to know when the old are going to die, so that they may not throw away their attentions on them for nothing, as is sometimes the case. The present arrangement is a putting of the cart before the horse.

*Pl.* There is a great deal more sound sense in it than you suppose, Terpsion. Besides, what right have you young fellows got to be prying after other men's goods, and thrusting yourselves upon your childless elders? You look rather foolish, when you get buried first; it tickles people immensely; the more fervent your prayers for the death of your aged friend, the greater is the general exultation when you precede him. It has become quite a profession lately, this amorous devotion to old men and women,—childless, of course; children destroy the illusion. By the way though, some of the beloved objects see through your dirty motives well enough by now; they have children, but they pretend to hate them, and so have lovers all the same. When their wills come to be read, their faithful bodyguard is not included: nature asserts itself, the children get their rights, and the lovers realize, with gnashings of teeth, that they have been taken in.

*Ter.* Too true! The luxuries that Thucritus has enjoyed at my expense! He always looked as if he were at the point of death. I never went to see him, but he would groan and squeak like a chicken barely out of the shell: I considered that he might step into his coffin at any moment, and heaped gift upon gift, for fear of being outdone in generosity by my rivals; I passed anxious, sleepless nights, reckoning and arranging all; 'twas this, the sleeplessness and the anxiety, that brought me

to my death. And he swallows my bait whole, and attends my funeral chuckling.

*Pl.* Well done, Thucritus! Long may you live to enjoy your wealth,—and your joke at the youngsters' expense; many a toady may you send hither before your own time comes!

*Ter.* Now I think of it, it *would* be a satisfaction if Charoeades were to die before him.

*Pl.* Charoeades! My dear Terpsion, Phido, Melanthus,—every one of them will be here before Thucritus,—all victims of this same anxiety!

*Ter.* That is as it should be. Hold on, Thucritus! F.

## VII

*Zenophantus. Callidemides*

*Ze.* Ah, Callidemides, and how did *you* come by your end? As for me, I was free of Dinias's table, and there died of a surfeit; but that is stale news; you were there, of course.

*Cal.* Yes, I was. Now there was an element of surprise about *my* fate. I suppose you know that old Ptoeodorus?

*Ze.* The rich man with no children, to whom you gave most of your company?

*Cal.* That is the man; he had promised to leave me his heir, and I used to show my appreciation. However, it went on such a time; Tithonus was a juvenile to him; so I found a short cut to my property. I bought a potion, and agreed with the butler that next time his master called for wine (he is a pretty stiff drinker) he should have this ready in a cup and present it; and I was pledged to reward the man with his freedom.

*Ze.* And what happened? this is interesting.

*Cal.* When we came from bath, the young fellow had two cups ready, one with the poison for Ptoeodorus, and the other for me; but by some blunder he handed me the poisoned cup,

and Ptoeodorus the plain; and behold, before he had done drinking, there was I sprawling on the ground, a vicarious corpse! Why are you laughing so, Zenophantus? I am your friend; such mirth is unseemly.

*Ze.* Well, it was such a humorous exit. And how did the old man behave?

*Cal.* He was dreadfully distressed for the moment; then he saw, I suppose, and laughed as much as you over the butler's trick.

*Ze.* Ah, short cuts are no better for you than for other people, you see; the high road would have been safer, if not quite so quick. H.

## VIII

*Cnemon. Damnippus*

*Cne.* Why, 'tis the proverb fulfilled! The fawn hath taken the lion.

*Dam.* What's the matter, Cnemon?

*Cne.* The matter! I have been fooled, miserably fooled. I have passed over all whom I should have liked to make my heirs, and left my money to the wrong man.

*Dam.* How was that?

*Cne.* I had been speculating on the death of Hermolaus, the millionaire. He had no children, and my attentions had been well received by him. I thought it would be a good idea to let him know that I had made my will in his favour, on the chance of its exciting his emulation.

*Dam.* Yes; and Hermolaus?

*Cne.* What *his* will was, I don't know. I died suddenly,—the roof came down about my ears; and now Hermolaus is my heir The pike has swallowed hook and bait.

*Dam.* And your anglership into the bargain. The pit that you digged for other....

*Cne.* That's about the truth of the matter, confound it.

F.

## IX

*Simylus. Polystratus*

*Si.* So here you are at last, Polystratus; you must be something very like a centenarian.

*Pol.* Ninety-eight.

*Si.* And what sort of a life have you had of it, these thirty years? you were about seventy when I died.

*Pol.* Delightful, though you may find it hard to believe.

*Si.* It *is* surprising that you could have any joy of your life—old, weak, and childless, moreover.

*Pol.* In the first place, I could do just what I liked; there were still plenty of handsome boys and dainty women; perfumes were sweet, wine kept its bouquet, Sicilian feasts were nothing to mine.

*Si.* This *is* a change, to be sure; you were very economical in my day.

*Pol.* Ah, but, my simple friend, these good things were presents—came in streams. From dawn my doors were thronged with visitors, and in the day it was a procession of the fairest gifts of earth.

*Si.* Why, you must have seized the crown after my death.

*Pol.* Oh no, it was only that I inspired a number of tender passions.

*Si.* Tender passions, indeed! what, you, an old man with hardly a tooth left in your head!

*Pol.* Certainly; the first of our townsmen were in love with me. Such as you see me, old, bald, blear-eyed, rheumy, they

delighted to do me honour; happy was the man on whom my glance rested a moment.

*Si.* Well, then, you had some adventure like Phaon's, when he rowed Aphrodite across from Chios; your God granted your prayer and made you young and fair and lovely again.

*Pol.* No, no; I was as you see me, and I was the object of all desire.

*Si.* Oh, I give it up.

*Pol.* Why, I should have thought you knew the violent passion for old men who have plenty of money and no children.

*Si.* Ah, now I comprehend your beauty, old fellow; it was the *Golden* Aphrodite bestowed it.

*Pol.* I assure you, Simylus, I had a good deal of satisfaction out of my lovers; they idolized me, almost. Often I would be coy and shut some of them out. Such rivalries! such jealous emulations!

*Si.* And how did you dispose of your fortune in the end?

*Pol.* I gave each an express promise to make him my heir; he believed, and treated me to more attentions than ever; meanwhile I had another genuine will, which was the one I left, with a message to them all to go hang.

*Si.* Who was the heir by this one? one of your relations, I suppose.

*Pol.* Not likely; it was a handsome young Phrygian I had lately bought.

*Si.* Age?

*Pol.* About twenty.

*Si.* Ah, I can guess his office.

*Pol.* Well, you know, he deserved the inheritance much better than they did; he was a barbarian and a rascal; but by this time he has the best of society at his beck. So he inherited; and now he is one of the aristocracy; his smooth chin and his

foreign accent are no bars to his being called nobler than Codrus, handsomer than Nireus, wiser than Odysseus.

*Si.* Well, *I* don't mind; let him be Emperor of Greece, if he likes, so long as he keeps the property away from that other crew. H.

## X

*Charon. Hermes. Various Shades*

*Ch.* I'll tell you how things stand. Our craft, as you see, is small, and leaky, and three-parts rotten; a single lurch, and she will capsize without more ado. And here are all you passengers, each with his luggage. If you come on board like that, I am afraid you may have cause to repent it; especially those who have not learnt to swim.

*Her.* Then how are we to make a trip of it?

*Ch.* I'll tell you. They must leave all this nonsense behind them on shore, and come aboard in their skins. As it is, there will be no room to spare. And in future, Hermes, mind you admit no one till he has cleared himself of encumbrances, as I say. Stand by the gangway, and keep an eye on them, and make them strip before you let them pass.

*Her.* Very good. Well, Number One, who are you?

*Men.* Menippus. Here are my wallet and staff; overboard with them. I had the sense not to bring my cloak.

*Her.* Pass on, Menippus; you're a good fellow; you shall have the seat of honour, up by the pilot, where you can see every one.—Here is a handsome person; who is he?

*Char.* Charmoleos of Megara; the irresistible, whose kiss was worth a thousand pounds.

*Her.* That beauty must come off,—lips, kisses, and all; the flowing locks, the blushing cheeks, the skin entire. That's right. Now we're in better trim;—you may pass on.—And who is the stunning gentleman in the purple and the diadem?

*Lam.* I am Lampichus, tyrant of Gela.

*Her.* And what is all this splendour doing here, Lampichus?

*Lam.* How! would you have a tyrant come hither stripped?

*Her.* A tyrant! That would be too much to expect. But with a *shade* we must insist. Off with these things.

*Lam.* There, then: away goes my wealth.

*Her.* Pomp must go too, and pride; we shall be overfreighted else.

*Lam.* At least let me keep my diadem and robes.

*Her.* No, no; off they come!

*Lam.* Well? That is all, as you see for yourself.

*Her.* There is something more yet: cruelty, folly, insolence, hatred.

*Lam.* There then: I am bare.

*Her.* Pass on.—And who may you be, my bulky friend?

*Dam.* Damasias the athlete.

*Her.* To be sure; many is the time I have seen you in the gymnasium.

*Dam.* You have. Well, I have peeled; let me pass.

*Her.* Peeled! my dear sir, what, with all this fleshy encumbrance? Come, off with it; we should go to the bottom if you put one foot aboard. And those crowns, those victories, remove them.

*Dam.* There; no mistake about it this time; I am as light as any shade among them.

*Her.* That's more the kind of thing. On with you.—Crato, you can take off that wealth and luxury and effeminacy; and we can't have that funeral pomp here, nor those ancestral glories either; down with your rank and reputation, and any votes of thanks or inscriptions you have about you; and you need not tell us what size your tomb was; remarks of that kind come heavy.

*Cra.* Well, if I must, I must; there's no help for it.

*Her.* Hullo! in full armour? What does this mean? and why this trophy?

*A General.* I am a great conqueror; a valiant warrior; my country's pride.

*Her.* The trophy may stop behind; we are at peace; there is no demand for arms.—Whom have we here? whose is this knitted brow, this flowing beard? 'Tis some reverend sage, if outside goes for anything; he mutters; he is wrapped in meditation.

*Men.* That's a philosopher, Hermes; and an impudent quack into the bargain. Have him out of that cloak; you will find something to amuse you underneath it.

*Her.* Off with your clothes first; and then we will see to the rest. My goodness, what a bundle: quackery, ignorance, quarrelsomeness, vainglory; idle questionings, prickly arguments, intricate conceptions; humbug and gammon and wishy-washy hair-splittings without end; and hullo! why here's avarice, and self-indulgence, and impudence! luxury, effeminacy and peevishness!—Yes, I see them all; you need not try to hide them. Away with falsehood and swagger and superciliousness; why, the three-decker is not built that would hold you with all this luggage.

*A Philosopher.* I resign them all, since such is your bidding.

*Men.* Have his beard off too, Hermes; only look what a ponderous bush of a thing! There 's a good five pounds' weight there.

*Her.* Yes; the beard must go.

*Phil.* And who shall shave me?

*Her.* Menippus here shall take it off with the carpenter's axe; the gangway will serve for a block.

*Men.* Oh, can't I have a saw, Hermes? It would be much better fun.

*Her.* The axe must serve.—Shrewdly chopped!—Why, you look more like a man and less like a goat already.

*Men.* A little off the eyebrows ?

*Her.* Why, certainly ; he has trained them up all over his forehead, for reasons best known to himself.—Worm ! what, snivelling ? afraid of death ? Oh, get on board with you.

*Men.* He has still got the biggest thumper of all under his arm.

*Her.* What's that ?

*Men.* Flattery ; many is the good turn that has done him.

*Phil.* Oh, all right, Menippus ; suppose you leave your independence behind you, and your plain-speaking, and your indifference, and your high spirit, and your jests !—No one else here has a jest about him.

*Her.* Don't you, Menippus ! you stick to them ; useful commodities, these, on shipboard ; light and handy.—You rhetorician there, with your verbosities and your barbarisms, your antitheses and balances and periods, off with the whole pack of them.

*Rhet.* Away they go.

*Her.* All's ready. Loose the cable, and pull in the gangway ; haul up the anchor ; spread all sail ; and, pilot, look to your helm. Good luck to our voyage !—What are you all whining about, you fools ? You philosopher, late of the beard,—you're as bad as any of them.

*Phil.* Ah, Hermes : I had thought that the soul was immortal.

*Men.* He lies : that is not the cause of his distress.

*Her.* What is it, then ?

*Men.* He knows that he will never have a good dinner again ; never sneak about at night with his cloak over his head, going the round of the brothels ; never spend his mornings in fooling boys out of their money, under the pretext of teaching them wisdom.

*Phil.* And pray are *you* content to be dead ?

*Men.* It may be presumed so, as I sought death of my own

accord.—By the way, I surely heard a noise, as if people were shouting on the earth ?

*Her.* You did ; and from more than one quarter.—There are people running in a body to the Town-hall, exulting over the death of Lampichus ; the women have got hold of his wife ; his infant children fare no better,—the boys are giving them a handsome pelting. Then again you hear the applause that greets the orator Diophantus, as he pronounces the funeral oration of our friend Crato. Ah yes, and that's Damasias's mother, with her women, striking up a dirge. No one has a tear for you, Menippus ; your remains are left in peace. Privileged person !

*Men.* Wait a bit : before long you will hear the mournful howl of dogs, and the beating of crows' wings, as they gather to perform my funeral rites.

*Her.* I like your spirit.—However, here we are in port. Away with you all to the judgement-seat ; it is straight ahead. The ferryman and I must go back for a fresh load.

*Men.* Good voyage to you, Hermes.—Let us be getting on ; what are you all waiting for ? We have got to face the judge, sooner or later ; and by all accounts his sentences are no joke ; wheels, rocks, vultures are mentioned. Every detail of our lives will now come to light ! F.

## XI

*Crates. Diogenes*

*Cra.* Did you know Moerichus of Corinth, Diogenes ? A shipowner, rolling in money, with a cousin called Aristeas, nearly as rich. He had a Homeric quotation :—Wilt thou heave me ? shall I heave thee ?[1]

[1] Homer, *Il.* xxiii. 724. When Ajax and Odysseus have wrestled for some time without either's producing any impression, and the spectators are getting

*Diog.* What was the point of it ?

*Cra.* Why, the cousins were of equal age, expected to succeed to each other's wealth, and behaved accordingly. They published their wills, each naming the other sole heir in case of his own prior decease. So it stood in black and white, and they vied with each other in showing that deference which the relation demands. All the prophets, astrologers, and Chaldean dream-interpreters alike, and Apollo himself for that matter, held different views at different times about the winner; the thousands seemed to incline now to Aristeas's side, now to Moerichus's.

*Diog.* And how did it end ? I am quite curious.

*Cra.* They both died on the same day, and the properties passed to Eunomius and Thrasycles, two relations who had never had a presentiment of it. They had been crossing from Sicyon to Cirrha, when they were taken aback by a squall from the north-west, and capsized in mid-channel.

*Diog.* Cleverly done. Now, when we were alive, we never had such designs on one another. I never prayed for Antisthenes's death, with a view to inheriting his staff—though it was an extremely serviceable one, which he had cut himself from a wild olive; and I do not credit you, Crates, with ever having had an eye to my succession; it included the tub, and a wallet with two pints of lupines in it.

*Cra.* Why, no; these things were superfluities to me—and to yourself, indeed. The real necessities you inherited from Antisthenes, and I from you; and in those necessities was more grandeur and majesty than in the Persian Empire.

*Diog.* You allude to——

*Cra.* Wisdom, independence, truth, frankness, freedom.

tired of it, the former proposes a change in tactics. '"Let us hoist—try you with me or I with you."' The idea evidently is that each in turn is to offer only a passive resistance, and let his adversary try to fling him thus.' *Leaf.*

*Diog.* To be sure; now I think of it, I did inherit all this from Antisthenes, and left it to you with some addition.

*Cra.* Others, however, were not interested in such property; no one paid us the attentions of an expectant heir; they all had their eyes on gold, instead.

*Diog.* Of course; they had no receptacle for such things as we could give; luxury had made them so leaky—as full of holes as a worn-out purse. Put wisdom, frankness, or truth into them, and it would have dropped out; the bottom of the bag would have let them through, like the perforated cask into which those poor Danaids are always pouring. Gold, on the other hand, they could grip with tooth or nail or somehow.

*Cra.* Result: our wealth will still be ours down here; while they will arrive with no more than one penny, and even that must be left with the ferryman. H.

## XII

*Alexander. Hannibal. Minos. Scipio*

*Alex.* Libyan, I claim precedence of you. I am the better man.

*Han.* Pardon me.

*Alex.* Then let Minos decide.

*Mi.* Who are you both?

*Alex.* This is Hannibal, the Carthaginian: I am Alexander, the son of Philip.

*Mi.* Bless me, a distinguished pair! And what is the quarrel about?

*Alex.* It is a question of precedence. He says he is the better general: and I maintain that neither Hannibal nor (I might almost add) any of my predecessors was my equal in strategy; all the world knows that.

*Mi.* Well, you shall each have your say in turn: the Libyan first.

*Han.* Fortunately for me, Minos, I have mastered Greek since I have been here; so that my adversary will not have even that advantage of me. Now I hold that the highest praise is due to those who have won their way to greatness from obscurity; who have clothed themselves in power, and shown themselves fit for dominion. I myself entered Spain with a handful of men, took service under my brother, and was found worthy of the supreme command. I conquered the Celtiberians, subdued Western Gaul, crossed the Alps, overran the valley of the Po, sacked town after town, made myself master of the plains, approached the bulwarks of the capital, and in one day slew such a host, that their finger-rings were measured by bushels, and the rivers were bridged by their bodies. And this I did, though I had never been called a son of Ammon; I never pretended to be a god, never related visions of my mother; I made no secret of the fact that I was mere flesh and blood. My rivals were the ablest generals in the world, commanding the best soldiers in the world; I warred not with Medes or Assyrians, who fly before they are pursued, and yield the victory to him that dares take it.

Alexander, on the other hand, in increasing and extending as he did the dominion which he had inherited from his father, was but following the impetus given to him by Fortune. And this conqueror had no sooner crushed his puny adversary by the victories of Issus and Arbela, than he forsook the traditions of his country, and lived the life of a Persian; accepting the prostrations of his subjects, assassinating his friends at his own table, or handing them over to the executioner. I in my command respected the freedom of my country, delayed not to obey her summons, when the enemy with their huge armament invaded Libya, laid aside the privileges of my office, and sub-

mitted to my sentence without a murmur. Yet I was a barbarian all unskilled in Greek culture; I could not recite Homer, nor had I enjoyed the advantages of Aristotle's instruction; I had to make a shift with such qualities as were mine by nature.—It is on these grounds that I claim the pre-eminence. My rival has indeed all the lustre that attaches to the wearing of a diadem, and—I know not—for Macedonians such things may have charms: but I cannot think that this circumstance constitutes a higher claim than the courage and genius of one who owed nothing to Fortune, and everything to his own resolution.

*Mi.* Not bad, for a Libyan.—Well, Alexander, what do you say to that?

*Alex.* Silence, Minos, would be the best answer to such confident self-assertion. The tongue of Fame will suffice of itself to convince you that I was a great prince, and my opponent a petty adventurer. But I would have you consider the distance between us. Called to the throne while I was yet a boy, I quelled the disorders of my kingdom, and avenged my father's murder. By the destruction of Thebes, I inspired the Greeks with such awe, that they appointed me their commander-in-chief; and from that moment, scorning to confine myself to the kingdom that I inherited from my father, I extended my gaze over the entire face of the earth, and thought it shame if I should govern less than the whole. With a small force I invaded Asia, gained a great victory on the Granicus, took Lydia, Ionia, Phrygia,—in short, subdued all that was within my reach, before I commenced my march for Issus, where Darius was waiting for me at the head of his myriads. You know the sequel: yourselves can best say what was the number of the dead whom on one day I dispatched hither. The ferryman tells me that his boat would not hold them; most of them had to come across on rafts of their own construction. In these enterprises, I was ever at the head of my troops, ever courted danger. To

say nothing of Tyre and Arbela, I penetrated into India, and carried my empire to the shores of Ocean ; I captured elephants ; I conquered Porus ; I crossed the Tanais, and worsted the Scythians—no mean enemies—in a tremendous cavalry engagement. I heaped benefits upon my friends : I made my enemies taste my resentment. If men took me for a god, I cannot blame them ; the vastness of my undertakings might excuse such a belief. But to conclude. I died a king : Hannibal, a fugitive at the court of the Bithynian Prusias—fitting end for villany and cruelty. Of his Italian victories I say nothing ; they were the fruit not of honest legitimate warfare, but of treachery, craft, and dissimulation. He taunts me with self-indulgence : my illustrious friend has surely forgotten the pleasant time he spent in Capua among the ladies, while the precious moments fleeted by. Had I not scorned the Western world, and turned my attention to the East, what would it have cost me to make the bloodless conquest of Italy, and Libya, and all, as far West as Gades ? But nations that already cowered beneath a master were unworthy of my sword.—I have finished, Minos, and await your decision ; of the many arguments I might have used, these shall suffice.

*Sci.* First, Minos, let me speak.

*Mi.* And who are you, friend ? and where do you come from ?

*Sci.* I am Scipio, the Roman general, who destroyed Carthage, and gained great victories over the Libyans.

*Mi.* Well, and what have you to say ?

*Sci.* That Alexander is my superior, and I am Hannibal's, having defeated him, and driven him to ignominious flight. What impudence is this, to contend with Alexander, to whom I, your conqueror, would not presume to compare myself !

*Mi.* Honestly spoken, Scipio, on my word ! Very well, then : Alexander comes first, and you next ; and I think we must say Hannibal third. And a very creditable third, too. F.

## XIII

*Diogenes. Alexander*

*Diog.* Dear me, Alexander, *you* dead like the rest of us?

*Alex.* As you see, sir; is there anything extraordinary in a mortal's dying?

*Diog.* So Ammon lied when he said you were his son; you were Philip's after all.

*Alex.* Apparently; if I had been Ammon's, I should not have died.

*Diog.* Strange! there were tales of the same order about Olympias too. A serpent visited her, and was seen in her bed; we were given to understand that that was how you came into the world, and Philip made a mistake when he took you for his.

*Alex.* Yes, I was told all that myself; however, I know now that my mother's and the Ammon stories were all moonshine.

*Diog.* Their lies were of some practical value to you, though; your divinity brought a good many people to their knees. But now, whom did you leave your great empire to?

*Alex.* Diogenes, I cannot tell you. I had no time to leave any directions about it, beyond just giving Perdiccas my ring as I died. Why are you laughing?

*Diog.* Oh, I was only thinking of the Greeks' behaviour; directly you succeeded, how they flattered you! their elected patron, generalissimo against the barbarian; one of the twelve Gods according to some; temples built and sacrifices offered to the Serpent's son! If I may ask, where did your Macedonians bury you?

*Alex.* I have lain in Babylon a full month to-day; and Ptolemy of the Guards is pledged, as soon as he can get a moment's respite from present disturbances, to take and bury me in Egypt, there to be reckoned among the Gods.

*Diog.* I have some reason to laugh, you see; still nursing vain hopes of developing into an Osiris or Anubis! Pray, your Godhead, put these expectations from you; none may re-ascend who has once sailed the lake and penetrated our entrance; Aeacus is watchful, and Cerberus an awkward customer. But there is one thing I wish you would tell me: how do you like thinking over all the earthly bliss you left to come here—your guards and armour-bearers and lieutenant-governors, your heaps of gold and adoring peoples, Babylon and Bactria, your huge elephants, your honour and glory, those conspicuous drives with white-cinctured locks and clasped purple cloak? does the thought of them *hurt*? What, crying? silly fellow! did not your wise Aristotle include in his instructions any hint of the insecurity of fortune's favours?

*Alex.* Wise? call him the craftiest of all flatterers. Allow me to know a little more than other people about Aristotle; his requests and his letters came to *my* address; *I* know how he profited by my passion for culture; how he would toady and compliment me, to be sure! now it was my beauty—that too is included under The Good; now it was my deeds and my money; for money too he called a Good—he meant that he was not going to be ashamed of taking it. Ah, Diogenes, an impostor; and a past master at it too. For me, the result of his wisdom is that I am distressed for the things you catalogued just now, as if I had lost in them the chief Goods.

*Diog.* Wouldst know thy course? I will prescribe for your distress. Our flora, unfortunately, does not include hellebore; but you take plenty of Lethe-water—good, deep, repeated draughts; that will relieve your distress over the Aristotelian Goods. Quick; here are Clitus, Callisthenes, and a lot of others making for you; they mean to tear you in pieces and pay you out. Here, go the opposite way; and remember, repeated draughts. H.

# XIV

*Philip. Alexander*

*Phil.* You cannot deny that you are my son this time, Alexander; you would not have died if you had been Ammon's.

*Alex.* I knew all the time that you, Philip, son of Amyntas, were my father. I only accepted the statement of the oracle because I thought it was good policy.

*Phil.* What, to suffer yourself to be fooled by lying priests?

*Alex.* No, but it had an awe-inspiring effect upon the barbarians. When they thought they had a God to deal with, they gave up the struggle; which made their conquest a simple matter.

*Phil.* And whom did *you* ever conquer that was worth conquering? Your adversaries were ever timid creatures, with their bows and their targets and their wicker shields. It was other work conquering the Greeks: Boeotians, Phocians, Athenians; Arcadian hoplites, Thessalian cavalry, javelin-men from Elis, peltasts of Mantinea; Thracians, Illyrians, Paeonians; to subdue these was something. But for gold-laced womanish Medes and Persians and Chaldaeans,—why, it had been done before: did you never hear of the expedition of the Ten Thousand under Clearchus? and how the enemy would not even come to blows with them, but ran away before they were within bow-shot?

*Alex.* Still, there were the Scythians, father, and the Indian elephants; they were no joke. And *my* conquests were not gained by dissension or treachery; I broke no oath, no promise, nor ever purchased victory at the expense of honour. As to the Greeks, most of them joined me without a struggle; and I dare say you have heard how I handled Thebes.

*Phil.* I know all about that; I had it from Clitus, whom you

ran through the body, in the middle of dinner, because he presumed to mention my achievements in the same breath with yours. They tell me too that you took to aping the manners of your conquered Medes; abandoned the Macedonian cloak in favour of the *candys*, assumed the upright tiara, and exacted oriental prostrations from Macedonian freemen! This is delicious. As to your brilliant matches, and your beloved Hephaestion, and your scholars in lions' cages,—the less said the better. I have only heard one thing to your credit: you respected the person of Darius's beautiful wife, and you provided for his mother and daughters; there you acted like a king.

*Alex.* And have you nothing to say of my adventurous spirit, father, when I was the first to leap down within the ramparts of Oxydracae, and was covered with wounds?

*Phil.* Not a word. Not that it is a bad thing, in my opinion, for a king to get wounded occasionally, and to face danger at the head of his troops: but this was the last thing that *you* were called upon to do. You were passing for a God; and your being wounded, and carried off the field on a litter, bleeding and groaning, could only excite the ridicule of the spectators: Ammon stood convicted of quackery, his oracle of falsehood, his priests of flattery. The son of Zeus in a swoon, requiring medical assistance! who could help laughing at the sight? And now that you have died, can you doubt that many a jest is being cracked on the subject of your divinity, as men contemplate the God's corpse laid out for burial, and already going the way of all flesh? Besides, your achievements lose half their credit from this very circumstance which you say was so useful in facilitating your conquests: nothing you did could come up to your divine reputation.

*Alex.* The world thinks otherwise. I am ranked with Heracles and Dionysus; and, for that matter, I took Aornos, which was more than either of them could do.

*Phil.* There spoke the son of Ammon. Heracles and Dionysus, indeed! You ought to be ashamed of yourself, Alexander; when will you learn to drop that bombast, and know yourself for the shade that you are? F.

## XV

*Antilochus. Achilles*

*Ant.* Achilles, what you were saying to Odysseus the other day about death was very poor-spirited; I should have expected better things from a pupil of Chiron and Phoenix. I was listening; you said you would rather be a servant on earth to some poor hind 'of scanty livelihood possessed,' than king of all the dead. Such sentiments might have been very well in the mouth of a poor-spirited cowardly Phrygian, dishonourably in love with life: for the son of Peleus, boldest of all Heroes, so to vilify himself, is a disgrace; it gives the lie to all your life; you might have had a long inglorious reign in Phthia, and your own choice was death and glory.

*Ach.* In those days, son of Nestor, I knew not this place; ignorant whether of those two was the better, I esteemed that flicker of fame more than life; now I see that it is worthless, let folk up there make what verses of it they will. 'Tis dead level among the dead, Antilochus; strength and beauty are no more; we welter all in the same gloom, one no better than another; the shades of Trojans fear me not, Achaeans pay me no reverence; each may say what he will; a man is a ghost, 'or be he churl, or be he peer.' It irks me; I would fain be a servant, and alive.

*Ant.* But what help, Achilles? 'tis Nature's decree that by all means all die. We must abide by her law, and not fret at her commands. Consider too how many of us are with you here; Odysseus comes ere long; how else? Is there not com-

fort in the common fate? 'tis something not to suffer alone. See Heracles, Meleager, and many another great one; they, methinks, would not choose return, if one would send them up to serve poor destitute men.

*Ach.* Ay, your intent is friendly; but I know not, the thought of the past life irks me—and each of you too, if I mistake not. And if you confess it not, the worse for you, smothering your pain.

*Ant.* Not the worse, Achilles; the better; for we see that speech is unavailing. Be silent, bear, endure—that is our resolve, lest such longings bring mockery on us, as on you.

H.

## XVI

*Diogenes. Heracles*

*Diog.* Surely this is Heracles I see? By his godhead, 'tis no other! The bow, the club, the lion's-skin, the giant frame; 'tis Heracles complete. Yet how should this be?—a son of Zeus, and mortal? I say, Mighty Conqueror, are you dead? I used to sacrifice to you in the other world; I understood you were a God!

*Her.* Thou didst well. Heracles is with the Gods in Heaven,

And hath white-ankled Hebe there to wife.

I am his phantom.

*Diog.* His phantom! What then, can one half of any one be a God, and the other half mortal?

*Her.* Even so. The God still lives. 'Tis I, his counterpart, am dead.

*Diog.* I see. You're a dummy; he palms you off upon Pluto, instead of coming himself. And here are you, enjoying *his* mortality!

*Her.* 'Tis somewhat as thou hast said.

*Diog.* Well, but where were Aeacus's keen eyes, that he let

a counterfeit Heracles pass under his very nose, and never knew the difference ?

*Her.* I was made very like to him.

*Diog.* I believe you ! Very like indeed, no difference at all ! Why, we may find it's the other way round, that you are Heracles, and the phantom is in Heaven, married to Hebe !

*Her.* Prating knave, no more of thy gibes ; else thou shalt presently learn how great a God calls me phantom.

*Diog.* H'm. That bow looks as if it meant business. And yet,—what have I to fear now ? A man can die but once. Tell me, phantom,—by your great Substance I adjure you—did you serve him in your present capacity in the upper world ? Perhaps you were one individual during your lives, the separation taking place only at your deaths, when he, the God, soared heavenwards, and you, the phantom, very properly made your appearance here ?

*Her.* Thy ribald questions were best unanswered. Yet thus much thou shalt know.—All that was Amphitryon in Heracles, is dead ; I am that mortal part. The Zeus in him lives, and is with the Gods in Heaven.

*Diog.* Ah, now I see ! Alcmena had twins, you mean,—Heracles the son of Zeus, and Heracles the son of Amphitryon ? You were really half-brothers all the time ?

*Her.* Fool ! not so. We twain were one Heracles.

*Diog.* It's a little difficult to grasp, the two Heracleses packed into one. I suppose you must have been like a sort of Centaur, man and God all mixed together ?

*Her.* And are not all thus composed of two elements,—the body and the soul ? What then should hinder the soul from being in Heaven, with Zeus who gave it, and the mortal part—myself—among the dead ?

*Diog.* Yes, yes, my esteemed son of Amphitryon,—that would be all very well if you were a body ; but you see you are a

phantom, you have no body. At this rate we shall get three Heracleses.

*Her. Three?*

*Diog.* Yes; look here. One in Heaven: one in Hades, that's you, the phantom: and lastly the body, which by this time has returned to dust. That makes three. Can you think of a good father for number Three?

*Her.* Impudent quibbler! And who art *thou*?

*Diog.* I am Diogenes's phantom, late of Sinope. But my original, I assure you, is not 'among th' immortal Gods,' but here among dead men; where he enjoys the best of company, and snaps my fingers at Homer and all hair-splitting.

F.

## XVII

*Menippus. Tantalus*

*Me.* What are you crying out about, Tantalus? standing at the edge and whining like that!

*Tan.* Ah, Menippus, I thirst, I perish!

*Me.* What, not enterprise enough to bend down to it, or scoop up some in your palm?

*Tan.* It is no use bending down; the water shrinks away as soon as it sees me coming. And if I do scoop it up and get it to my mouth, the outside of my lips is hardly moist before it has managed to run through my fingers, and my hand is as dry as ever.

*Me.* A very odd experience, that. But by the way, why do you want to drink? you have no body—the part of you that was liable to hunger and thirst is buried in Lydia somewhere; how can you, the spirit, hunger or thirst any more?

*Tan.* Therein lies my punishment—soul thirsts as if it were body.

*Me.* Well, let that pass, as you say thirst is your punishment. But why do you mind it? are you afraid of *dying*, for want of drink? I do not know of any second Hades; can you die to this one, and go further?

*Tan.* No, that is quite true. But you see this is part of the sentence: I must long for drink, though I have no need of it.

*Me.* There is no meaning in that. There *is* a draught you need, though; some neat hellebore is what *you* want; you are suffering from a converse hydrophobia; you are not afraid of water, but you are of thirst.

*Tan.* I would as lief drink hellebore as anything, if I could but drink.

*Me.* Never fear, Tantalus; neither you nor any other ghost will ever do that; it is impossible, you see; just as well we have not all got a penal thirst like you, with the water running away from us. H.

## XVIII

*Menippus. Hermes*

*Me.* Where are all the beauties, Hermes? Show me round; I am a new-comer.

*Her.* I am busy, Menippus. But look over there to your right, and you will see Hyacinth, Narcissus, Nireus, Achilles, Tyro, Helen, Leda,—all the beauties of old.

*Me.* I can only see bones, and bare skulls; most of them are exactly alike.

*Her.* Those bones, of which you seem to think so lightly, have been the theme of admiring poets.

*Me.* Well, but show me Helen; I shall never be able to make her out by myself.

*Her.* This skull is Helen.

*Me.* And for this a thousand ships carried warriors from every

part of Greece; Greeks and barbarians were slain, and cities made desolate.

*Her.* Ah, Menippus, you never saw the living Helen; or you would have said with Homer,

> Well might they suffer grievous years of toil
> Who strove for such a prize.

We look at withered flowers, whose dye is gone from them, and what can we call them but unlovely things? Yet in the hour of their bloom these unlovely things were things of beauty.

*Me.* Strange, that the Greeks could not realize what it was for which they laboured; how short-lived, how soon to fade.

*Her.* I have no time for moralizing. Choose your spot, where you will, and lie down. I must go to fetch new dead.

F.

## XIX

*Aeacus. Protesilaus. Menelaus. Paris*

*Aea.* Now then, Protesilaus, what do you mean by assaulting and throttling Helen?

*Pro.* Why, it was all her fault that I died, leaving my house half built, and my bride a widow.

*Aea.* You should blame Menelaus, for taking you all to Troy after such a light-o'-love.

*Pro.* That is true; he shall answer it.

*Me.* No, no, my dear sir; Paris surely is the man; he outraged all rights in carrying off his host's wife with him. *He* deserves throttling, if you like, and not from you only, but from Greeks and barbarians as well, for all the deaths he brought upon them.

*Pro.* Ah, now I have it. Here, you—you *Paris! you* shall not escape my clutches.

*Pa.* Oh, come, sir, you will never wrong one of the same gentle craft as yourself. Am I not a lover too, and a subject

of your deity ? against love you know (with the best will in the world) how vain it is to strive ; 'tis a spirit that draws us whither it will.

*Pro.* There is reason in that. Oh, would that I had Love himself here in these hands !

*Aea.* Permit me to charge myself with his defence. He does not absolutely deny his responsibility for Paris's love ; but that for your death he refers to yourself, Protesilaus. You forgot all about your bride, fell in love with fame, and, directly the fleet touched the Troad, took that rash senseless leap, which brought you first to shore and to death.

*Pro.* Now it is my turn to correct, Aeacus. The blame does not rest with me, but with Fate ; so was my thread spun from the beginning.

*Aea.* Exactly so ; then why blame our good friends here ?

H.

## XX

*Menippus. Aeacus. Various Shades*

*Me.* In Pluto's name, Aeacus, show me all the sights of Hades.

*Aea.* That would be rather an undertaking, Menippus. However, you shall see the principal things. Cerberus here you know already, and the ferryman who brought you over. And you saw the Styx on your way, and Pyriphlegethon.

*Me.* Yes, and you are the gate-keeper ; I know all that ; and I have seen the King and the Furies. But show me the men of ancient days, especially the celebrities.

*Aea.* This is Agamemnon ; this is Achilles ; near him, Idomeneus ; next comes Odysseus ; then Ajax, Diomede, and all the great Greeks.

*Me.* Why, Homer, Homer, what is this ? All your great

heroes flung down upon the earth, shapeless, undistinguishable; mere meaningless dust; 'strengthless heads,' and no mistake.—Who is this one, Aeacus?

*Aea.* That is Cyrus; and here is Croesus; beyond him Sardanapalus, and beyond him again Midas. And yonder is Xerxes.

*Me.* Ha! and it was before this creature that Greece trembled? this is our yoker of Hellesponts, our designer of Athos-canals?—Croesus too! a sad spectacle! As to Sardanapalus, I will lend him a box on the ear, with your permission.

*Aea.* And crack his skull, poor dear! Certainly not.

*Me.* Then I must content myself with spitting in his ladyship's face.

*Aea.* Would you like to see the philosophers?

*Me.* I should like it of all things.

*Aea.* First comes Pythagoras.

*Me.* Good-day, Euphorbus, *alias* Apollo, *alias* what you will.

*Py.* Good-day, Menippus.

*Me.* What, no golden thigh nowadays?

*Py.* Why, no. I wonder if there is anything to eat in that wallet of yours?

*Me.* Beans, friend; you don't like beans.

*Py.* Try me. My principles have changed with my quarters. I find that down here our parents' heads are in no way connected with beans.

*Aea.* Here is Solon, the son of Execestides, and there is Thales. By them are Pittacus, and the rest of the sages, seven in all, as you see.

*Me.* The only resigned and cheerful countenances yet. Who is the one covered with ashes, like a loaf baked in the embers? He is all over blisters.

*Aea.* That is Empedocles. He was half-roasted when he got here from Etna.

*Me.* Tell me, my brazen-slippered friend, what induced you to jump into the crater ?

*Em.* I did it in a fit of melancholy.

*Me.* Not you. Vanity, pride, folly ; these were what burnt you up, slippers and all ; and serve you right. All that ingenuity was thrown away, too : your death was detected.—Aeacus, where is Socrates ?

*Aea.* He is generally talking nonsense with Nestor and Palamedes.

*Me.* But I should like to see him, if he is anywhere about.

*Aea.* You see the bald one ?

*Me.* They are all bald ; that is a distinction without a difference.

*Aea.* The snub-nosed one.

*Me.* There again : they are all snub-nosed.

*Soc.* Do you want me, Menippus ?

*Me.* The very man I am looking for.

*Soc.* How goes it in Athens ?

*Me.* There are a great many young men there professing philosophy ; and to judge from their dress and their walk, they should be perfect in it.

*Soc.* I have seen many such.

*Me.* For that matter, I suppose you saw Aristippus arrive, reeking with scent ; and Plato, the polished flatterer from Sicilian courts ?

*Soc.* And what do they think about *me* in Athens ?

*Me.* Ah, you are fortunate in that respect. You pass for a most remarkable man, omniscient in fact. And all the time—if the truth must out—you know absolutely nothing.

*Soc.* I told them that myself : but they would have it that that was my irony.

*Me.* And who are your friends ?

*Soc.* Charmides ; Phaedrus ; the son of Clinias.

*Me.* Ha, ha! still at your old trade; still an admirer of beauty.

*Soc.* How could I be better occupied? Will you join us?

*Me.* No, thank you; I am off, to take up my quarters by Croesus and Sardanapalus. I expect huge entertainment from their outcries.

*Aea.* I must be off, too; or some one may escape. You shall see the rest another day, Menippus.

*Me.* I need not detain you. I have seen enough.

F.

## XXI

*Menippus. Cerberus*

*Me.* My dear coz—for Cerberus and Cynic are surely related through the dog—I adjure you by the Styx, tell me how Socrates behaved during the descent. A God like you can doubtless articulate instead of barking, if he chooses.

*Cer.* Well, while he was some way off, he seemed quite unshaken; and I thought he was bent on letting the people outside realize the fact too. Then he passed into the opening and saw the gloom; I at the same time gave him a touch of the hemlock, and a pull by the leg, as he was rather slow. Then he squalled like a baby, whimpered about his children, and, oh, I don't know what he didn't do.

*Me.* So *he* was one of the theorists, was he? his indifference was a sham?

*Cer.* Yes; it was only that he accepted the inevitable, and put a bold face on it, pretending to welcome the universal fate, by way of impressing the bystanders. All that sort are the same, I tell you—bold resolute fellows as far as the entrance; it is inside that the real test comes.

*Me.* What did you think of *my* performance?

*Cer.* Ah, Menippus, you were the exception; you are a credit to the breed, and so was Diogenes before you. You two came in without any compulsion or pushing, of your own free will, with a laugh for yourselves and a curse for the rest. H.

## XXII

*Charon. Menippus. Hermes*

*Ch.* Your fare, you rascal.

*Me.* Bawl away, Charon, if it gives you any pleasure.

*Ch.* I brought you across: give me my fare.

*Me.* I can't, if I haven't got it.

*Ch.* And who is so poor that he has not got a penny?

*Me.* I for one; I don't know who else.

*Ch.* Pay: or, by Pluto, I'll strangle you.

*Me.* And I'll crack your skull with this stick.

*Ch.* So you are to come all that way for nothing?

*Me.* Let Hermes pay for me: he put me on board.

*Her.* I dare say! A fine time I shall have of it, if I am to pay for the shades.

*Ch.* I'm not going to let you off.

*Me.* You can haul up your ship and wait, for all I care. If I have not got the money, I can't pay you, can I?

*Ch.* You knew you ought to bring it?

*Me.* I knew that: but I hadn't got it. What would you have? I ought not to have died, I suppose?

*Ch.* So you are to have the distinction of being the only passenger that ever crossed gratis?

*Me.* Oh, come now: gratis! I took an oar, and I baled; and I didn't cry, which is more than can be said for any of the others.

*Ch.* That's neither here nor there. I must have my penny; it's only right.

*Me.* Well, you had better take me back again to life.

*Ch.* Yes, and get a thrashing from Aeacus for my pains! I like that.

*Me.* Well, don't bother me.

*Ch.* Let me see what you have got in that wallet.

*Me.* Beans: have some?—and a Hecate's supper.

*Ch.* Where did you pick up this Cynic, Hermes? The noise he made on the crossing, too! laughing and jeering at all the rest, and singing, when every one else was at his lamentations.

*Her.* Ah, Charon, you little know your passenger! Independence, every inch of him: he cares for no one. 'Tis Menippus.

*Ch.* Wait till I catch you——

*Me.* Precisely; I'll wait—till you catch me again. F.

## XXIII

*Protesilaus. Pluto. Persephone*

*Pro.* Lord, King, our Zeus! and thou, daughter of Demeter! grant a lover's boon!

*Pl.* What do you want? who are you?

*Pro.* Protesilaus, son of Iphiclus, of Phylace, one of the Achaean host, the first that died at Troy. And the boon I ask is release and one day's life.

*Pl.* Ah, friend, that is the love that all these dead men love, and none shall ever win.

*Pro.* Nay, dread lord, 'tis not life I love, but the bride that I left new wedded in my chamber that day I sailed away—ah me, to be slain by Hector as my foot touched land! My lord, that yearning gives me no peace. I return content, if she might look on me but for an hour.

*Pl.* Did you miss your dose of Lethe, man?

*Pro.* Nay, lord; but this prevailed against it.

*Pl.* Oh, well, wait a little; she will come to you one day; it is so simple; no need for you to be going up.

*Pro.* My heart is sick with hope deferred; thou too, O Pluto, hast loved; thou knowest what love is.

*Pl.* What good will it do you to come to life for a day, and then renew your pains?

*Pro.* I think to win her to come with me, and bring two dead for one.

*Pl.* It may not be; it never has been.

*Pro.* Bethink thee, Pluto. 'Twas for this same cause that ye gave Orpheus his Eurydice; and Heracles had interest enough to be granted Alcestis; she was of my kin.

*Pl.* Would you like to present that bare ugly skull to your fair bride? will she admit you, when she cannot tell you from another man? I know well enough; she will be frightened and run from you, and you will have gone all that way for nothing.

*Per.* Husband, doctor that disease yourself: tell Hermes, as soon as Protesilaus reaches the light, to touch him with his wand, and make him young and fair as when he left the bridal chamber.

*Pl.* Well, I cannot refuse a lady. Hermes, take him up and turn him into a bridegroom. But mind, you sir, a strictly temporary one. H.

## XXIV

*Diogenes. Mausolus*

*Diog.* Why so proud, Carian? How are you better than the rest of us?

*Mau.* Sinopean, to begin with, I was a king; king of all Caria, ruler of many Lydians, subduer of islands, conqueror of well-nigh the whole of Ionia, even to the borders of Miletus.

Further, I was comely, and of noble stature, and a mighty warrior. Finally, a vast tomb lies over me in Halicarnassus, of such dimensions, of such exquisite beauty as no other shade can boast. Thereon are the perfect semblances of man and horse, carved in the fairest marble; scarcely may a temple be found to match it. These are the grounds of my pride: are they inadequate?

*Diog.* Kingship—beauty—heavy tomb; is that it?

*Mau.* It is as you say.

*Diog.* But, my handsome Mausolus, the power and the beauty are no longer there. If we were to appoint an umpire now on the question of comeliness, I see no reason why he should prefer your skull to mine. Both are bald, and bare of flesh; our teeth are equally in evidence; each of us has lost his eyes, and each is snub-nosed. Then as to the tomb and the costly marbles, I dare say such a fine erection gives the Halicarnassians something to brag about and show off to strangers: but I don't see, friend, that you are the better for it, unless it is that you claim to carry more weight than the rest of us, with all that marble on the top of you.

*Mau.* Then all is to go for nothing? Mausolus and Diogenes are to rank as equals?

*Diog.* Equals! My dear sir, no; I don't say that. While Mausolus is groaning over the memories of earth, and the felicity which he supposed to be his, Diogenes will be chuckling. While Mausolus boasts of the tomb raised to him by Artemisia, his wife and sister, Diogenes knows not whether he has a tomb or no—the question never having occurred to him; he knows only that his name is on the tongues of the wise, as one who lived the life of a man; a higher monument than yours, vile Carian slave, and set on firmer foundations. F.

## XXV

*Nireus. Thersites. Menippus*

*Ni.* Here we are; Menippus shall award the palm of beauty. Menippus, am I not better-looking than he?

*Me.* Well, who are you? I must know that first, mustn't I?

*Ni.* Nireus and Thersites.

*Me.* Which is which? I cannot tell that yet.

*Ther.* One to me; I am like you; you have no such superiority as Homer (blind, by the way) gave you when he called you the handsomest of men; he might peak my head and thin my hair, our judge finds me none the worse. Now, Menippus, make up your mind which is handsomer.

*Ni.* I, of course, I, the son of Aglaia and Charopus,

Comeliest of all that came 'neath Trojan walls.

*Me.* But not comeliest of all that come 'neath the earth, as far as I know. Your bones are much like other people's; and the only difference between your two skulls is that yours would not take much to stove it in. It is a tender article, something short of masculine.

*Ni.* Ask Homer what I was, when I sailed with the Achaeans.

*Me.* Dreams, dreams. I am looking at what you are; what you were is ancient history.

*Ni.* Am I not handsomer here, Menippus?

*Me.* You are not handsome at all, nor any one else either. Hades is a democracy; one man is as good as another here.

*Ther.* And a very tolerable arrangement too, if you ask me. H.

## XXVI

*Menippus. Chiron*

*Me.* I have heard that you were a god, Chiron, and that you died of your own choice ?

*Chi.* You were rightly informed. I am dead, as you see, and might have been immortal.

*Me.* And what should possess you, to be in love with Death ? He has no charm for most people.

*Chi.* You are a sensible fellow ; I will tell you. There was no further satisfaction to be had from immortality.

*Me.* Was it not a pleasure merely to live and see the light ?

*Chi.* No; it is variety, as I take it, and not monotony, that constitutes pleasure. Living on and on, everything always the same; sun, light, food, spring, summer, autumn, winter, one thing following another in unending sequence,—I sickened of it all. I found that enjoyment lay not in continual possession ; that deprivation had its share therein.

*Me.* Very true, Chiron. And how have you got on since you made Hades your home ?

*Chi.* Not unpleasantly. I like the truly republican equality that prevails ; and as to whether one is in light or darkness, that makes no difference at all. Then again there is no hunger or thirst here ; one is independent of such things.

*Me.* Take care, Chiron ! You may be caught in the snare of your own reasonings.

*Chi.* How should that be ?

*Me.* Why, if the monotony of the other world brought on satiety, the monotony here may do the same. You will have to look about for a further change, and I fancy there is no third life procurable.

*Chi.* Then what is to be done, Menippus ?

*Me.* Take things as you find them, I suppose, like a sensible fellow, and make the best of everything. F.

## XXVII

*Diogenes. Antisthenes. Crates*

*Diog.* Now, friends, we have plenty of time ; what say you to a stroll ? we might go to the entrance and have a look at the new-comers—what they are and how they behave.

*Ant.* The very thing. It will be an amusing sight—some weeping, some imploring to be let go, some resisting ; when Hermes collars them, they will stick their heels in and throw their weight back ; and all to no purpose.

*Cra.* Very well ; and meanwhile, let me give you my experiences on the way down.

*Diog.* Yes, go on, Crates ; I dare say you saw some entertaining sights.

*Cra.* We were a large party, of which the most distinguished were Ismenodorus, a rich townsman of ours, Arsaces, ruler of Media, and Oroetes the Armenian. Ismenodorus had been murdered by robbers going to Eleusis over Cithaeron, I believe. He was moaning, nursing his wound, apostrophizing the young children he had left, and cursing his foolhardiness. He knew Cithaeron and the Eleutherae district were all devastated by the wars, and yet he must take only two servants with him—with five bowls and four cups of solid gold in his baggage, too. Arsaces was an old man of rather imposing aspect ; he expressed his feelings in true barbaric fashion, was exceedingly angry at being expected to walk, and kept calling for his horse. In point of fact it had died with him, it and he having been simultaneously transfixed by a Thracian pikeman in the fight with the Cappadocians on the Araxes. Arsaces described to us how he had

charged far in advance of his men, and the Thracian, standing his ground and sheltering himself with his buckler, warded off the lance, and then, planting his pike, transfixed man and horse together.

*Ant.* How could it possibly be done simultaneously ?

*Cra.* Oh, quite simple. The Median was charging with his thirty-foot lance in front of him ; the Thracian knocked it aside with his buckler ; the point glanced by ; then he knelt, received the charge on his pike, pierced the horse's chest—the spirited beast impaling itself by its own impetus—, and finally ran Arsaces through groin and buttock. You see what happened ; it was the horse's doing rather than the man's. However, Arsaces did not at all appreciate equality, and wanted to come down on horseback. As for Oroetes, he was so tender-footed that he could not stand, far less walk. That is the way with all the Medes—once they are off their horses, they go delicately on tiptoe as if they were treading on thorns. He threw himself down, and there he lay ; nothing would induce him to get up ; so the excellent Hermes had to pick him up and carry him to the ferry ; how I laughed !

*Ant.* When *I* came down, I did not keep with the crowd ; I left them to their blubberings, ran on to the ferry, and secured a comfortable seat for the passage. Then as we crossed, they were divided between tears and sea-sickness, and gave me a merry time of it.

*Diog.* You two have described your fellow passengers ; now for mine. There came down with me Blepsias, the Pisatan usurer, Lampis, an Acarnanian freelance, and the Corinthian millionaire Damis. The last had been poisoned by his son, Lampis had cut his throat for love of the courtesan Myrtium, and the wretched Blepsias is supposed to have died of starvation ; his awful pallor and extreme emaciation looked like it. I inquired into the manner of their deaths, though I knew very

well. When Damis exclaimed upon his son, 'You only have your deserts,' I remarked,—'an old man of ninety living in luxury yourself with your million of money, and fobbing off your eighteen-year son with a few pence! As for you, sir Acarnanian'—he was groaning and cursing Myrtium—, 'why put the blame on Love? it belongs to yourself; you were never afraid of an enemy—took all sorts of risks in other people's service—and then let yourself be caught, my hero, by the artificial tears and sighs of the first wench you came across.' Blepsias uttered his own condemnation, without giving me time to do it for him: he had hoarded his money for heirs who were nothing to him, and been fool enough to reckon on immortality. I assure you it was no common satisfaction I derived from their whinings.

But here we are at the gate; we must keep our eyes open, and get the earliest view. Lord, lord, what a mixed crowd! and all in tears except these babes and sucklings. Why, the hoary seniors are all lamentation too; strange! has madam Life given them a love-potion? I must interrogate this most reverend senior of them all.—Sir, why weep, seeing that you have died full of years? has your excellency any complaint to make, after so long a term? Ah, but you were doubtless a king.

*Pauper.* Not so.

*Diog.* A provincial governor, then?

*Pauper.* No, nor that.

*Diog.* I see; you were wealthy, and do not like leaving your boundless luxury to die.

*Pauper.* You are quite mistaken; I was near ninety, made a miserable livelihood out of my line and rod, was excessively poor, childless, a cripple, and had nearly lost my sight.

*Diog.* And you still wished to live?

*Pauper.* Ay, sweet is the light, and dread is death; would that one might escape it!

*Diog.* You are beside yourself, old man; you are like a child kicking at the pricks, you contemporary of the ferryman. Well, we need wonder no more at youth, when age is still in love with life; one would have thought it should court death as the cure for its proper ills.—And now let us go our way, before our loitering here brings suspicion on us; they may think we are planning an escape. H.

## XXVIII

*Menippus. Tiresias*

*Me.* Whether you are blind or not, Tiresias, would be a difficult question. Eyeless sockets are the rule among us; there is no telling Phineus from Lynceus nowadays. However, I know that you were a seer, and that you enjoy the unique distinction of having been both man and woman; I have it from the poets. Pray tell me which you found the more pleasant life, the man's or the woman's?

*Ti.* The woman's, by a long way; it was much less trouble. Women have the mastery of men; and there is no fighting for them, no manning of walls, no squabbling in the assembly, no cross-examination in the law-courts.

*Me.* Well, but you have heard how Medea, in Euripides, compassionates her sex on their hard lot—on the intolerable pangs they endure in travail? And by the way—Medea's words remind me—did you ever have a child, when you were a woman, or were you barren?

*Ti.* What do you mean by that question, Menippus?

*Me.* Oh, nothing; but I should like to know, if it is no trouble to you.

*Ti.* I was not barren: but I did not have a child, exactly.

*Me.* No; but you might have had. That's all I wanted to know.

*Ti.* Certainly.

*Me.* And your feminine characteristics gradually vanished, and you developed a beard, and became a man? Or did the change take place in a moment?

*Ti.* Whither does your question tend? One would think you doubted the fact.

*Me.* And what should I do but doubt such a story? Am I to take it in, like a nincompoop, without asking myself whether it is possible or not?

*Ti.* At that rate, I suppose you are equally incredulous when you hear of women being turned into birds or trees or beasts,—Aëdon for instance, or Daphne, or Callisto?

*Me.* If I fall in with any of these ladies, I will see what they have to say about it. But to return, friend, to your own case: were you a prophet even in the days of your femininity? or did manhood and prophecy come together?

*Ti.* Pooh, you know nothing of the matter. I once settled a dispute among the Gods, and was blinded by Hera for my pains; whereupon Zeus consoled me with the gift of prophecy.

*Me.* Ah, you love a lie still, Tiresias. But there, 'tis your trade. You prophets! There is no truth in you. F.

## XXIX

*Agamemnon. Ajax*

*Ag.* If you went mad and wrought your own destruction, Ajax, in default of that you designed for us all, why put the blame on Odysseus? Why would you not vouchsafe him a look or a word, when he came to consult Tiresias that day? you stalked past your old comrade in arms as if he was beneath your notice.

*Aj.* Had I not good reason? My madness lies at the door of my solitary rival for the arms.

*Ag.* Did you expect to be unopposed, and carry it over us all without a contest?

*Aj.* Surely, in such a matter. The armour was mine by natural right, seeing I was Achilles's cousin. The rest of you, his undoubted superiors, refused to compete, recognizing my claim. It was the son of Laertes, he that I had rescued scores of times when he would have been cut to pieces by the Phrygians, who set up for a better man and a stronger claimant than I.

*Ag.* Blame Thetis, then, my good sir; it was she who, instead of delivering the inheritance to the next of kin, brought the arms and left the ownership an open question.

*Aj.* No, no; the guilt was in claiming them—alone, I mean.

*Ag.* Surely, Ajax, a mere man may be forgiven the sin of coveting honour—that sweetest bait for which each one of us adventured; nay, and he outdid you there, if a Trojan verdict counts.

*Aj.* Who inspired that verdict[1]? I know, but about the Gods we may not speak. Let that pass; but cease to hate Odysseus? 'tis not in my power, Agamemnon, though Athene's self should require it of me. H.

## XXX

*Minos. Sostratus*

*Mi.* Sostratus, the pirate here, can be dropped into Pyriphlegethon, Hermes; the temple-robber shall be clawed by the Chimera; and lay out the tyrant alongside of Tityus, there to have his liver torn by the vultures. And you honest fellows can make the best of your way to Elysium and the Isles of the Blest; this it is to lead righteous lives.

[1] Athene is meant. The allusion is to Homer, *Od.* xi. 547, a passage upon the contest for the arms of Achilles, in which Odysseus states that 'The judges were the sons of the Trojans, and Pallas Athene.'

*Sos.* A word with you, Minos. See if there is not some justice in my plea.

*Mi.* What, more pleadings? Have you not been convicted of villany and murder without end?

*Sos.* I have. Yet consider whether my sentence is just.

*Mi.* Is it just that you should have your deserts? If so, the sentence is just.

*Sos.* Well, answer my questions; I will not detain you long.

*Mi.* Say on, but be brief; I have other cases waiting for me.

*Sos.* The deeds of my life—were they in my own choice, or were they decreed by Fate?

*Mi.* Decreed, of course.

*Sos.* Then all of us, whether we passed for honest men or rogues, were the instruments of Fate in all that we did?

*Mi.* Certainly; Clotho prescribes the conduct of every man at his birth.

*Sos.* Now suppose a man commits a murder under compulsion of a power which he cannot resist, an executioner, for instance, at the bidding of a judge, or a bodyguard at that of a tyrant. Who is the murderer, according to you?

*Mi.* The judge, of course, or the tyrant. As well ask whether the sword is guilty, which is but the tool of his anger who is prime mover in the affair.

*Sos.* I am indebted to you for a further illustration of my argument. Again: a slave, sent by his master, brings me gold or silver; to whom am I to be grateful? who goes down on my tablets as a benefactor?

*Mi.* The sender; the bringer is but his minister.

*Sos.* Observe then your injustice! You punish us who are but the slaves of Clotho's bidding, and reward these, who do but minister to another's beneficence. For it will never be said that it was in our power to gainsay the irresistible ordinances of Fate?

*Mi.* Ah, Sostratus; look closely enough, and you will find plenty of inconsistencies besides these. However, I see you are no common pirate, but a philosopher in your way; so much you have gained by your questions. Let him go, Hermes; he shall not be punished after that. But mind, Sostratus, you must not put it into other people's heads to ask questions of this kind.

F.

## MENIPPUS

### A Necromantic Experiment

*Menippus. Philonides*

*Me.* All hail, my roof, my doors, my hearth and home!
How sweet again to see the light and thee!

*Phi.* Menippus the cynic, surely; even so, or there are visions about. Menippus, every inch of him. What has he been getting himself up like that for? sailor's cap, lyre, and lion-skin? However, here goes.—How are you, Menippus? where do *you* spring from? you have disappeared this long time.

*Me.* Death's lurking-place I leave, and those dark gates
Where Hades dwells, a God apart from Gods.

*Phi.* Good gracious! has Menippus died, all on the quiet, and come to life for a second spell?

*Me.* Not so; a *living* guest in Hades I.

*Phi.* But what induced you to take this queer original journey?

*Me.* Youth drew me on—too bold, too little wise.

*Phi.* My good man, truce to your heroics; get off those iambic stilts, and tell me in plain prose what this get-up means; what did you want with the lower regions? It is a journey that needs a motive to make it attractive.

*Me.* Dear friend, to Hades' realms I needs must go,
To counsel with Tiresias of Thebes.

*Phi.* Man, you must be mad; or why string verses instead of talking like one friend with another?

*Me.* My dear fellow, you need not be so surprised. I have just been in Euripides's and Homer's company; I suppose I am full to the throat with verse, and the numbers come as soon as
2 I open my mouth. But how are things going up here? what is Athens about?

*Phi.* Oh, nothing new; extortion, perjury, forty per cent., face-grinding.

*Me.* Poor misguided fools! they are not posted up in the latest lower-world legislation; the recent decrees against the rich will be too much for all their evasive ingenuity.

*Phi.* Do you mean to say the lower world has been making new regulations for *us*?

*Me.* Plenty of them, I assure you. But I may not publish them, nor reveal secrets; the result might be a suit for impiety in the court of Rhadamanthus.

*Phi.* Oh now, Menippus, in Heaven's name, no secrets between friends! you know I am no blabber; and I am initiated, if you come to that.

*Me.* 'Tis a hard thing you ask, and a perilous; yet for you I must venture it. It was resolved, then, that these rich who roll in money and keep their gold under lock and key like a Danae——

*Phi.* Oh, don't come to the decrees yet; begin at the beginning. I am particularly curious about your object in going, who showed you the way, and the whole story of what you saw and heard down there; you are a man of taste, and sure not to have missed anything worth looking at or listening to.

3 *Me.* I can refuse you nothing, you see; what is one to do, when a friend insists? Well, I will show you first the state of mind which put me on the venture. When I was a boy, and listened to Homer's and Hesiod's tales of war and civil strife—

and they do not confine themselves to the Heroes, but include the Gods in their descriptions, adulterous Gods, rapacious Gods, violent, litigious, usurping, incestuous Gods—, well, I found it all quite proper, and indeed was intensely interested in it. But as I came to man's estate, I observed that the laws flatly contradicted the poets, forbidding adultery, sedition, and rapacity. So I was in a very hazy state of mind, and could not tell what to make of it. The Gods would surely never have been guilty of such behaviour if they had not considered it good; and yet law-givers would never have recommended avoiding it, if avoidance had not seemed desirable.

In this perplexity, I determined to go to the people they 4
call philosophers, put myself in their hands, and ask them to make what they would of me and give me a plain reliable map of life. This was my idea in going to them; but the effort only shifted me from the frying-pan into the fire; it was just among these that my inquiry brought the greatest ignorance and bewilderment to light; they very soon convinced me that the real golden life is that of the man in the street. One of them would have me do nothing but seek pleasure and ensue it; according to him, Happiness was pleasure. Another recommended the exact contrary—toil and moil, bring the body under, be filthy and squalid, disgusting and abusive—concluding always with the tags from Hesiod about Virtue, or something about indefatigable pursuit of the ideal. Another bade me despise money, and reckon the acquisition of it as a thing indifferent; he too had his contrary, who declared wealth a good in itself. I will spare you their metaphysics; I was sickened with daily doses of Ideas, Incorporeal Things, Atoms, Vacua, and a multitude more. The extraordinary thing was that people maintaining the most opposite views would each of them produce convincing plausible arguments; when the same thing was called hot and cold by different persons, there was no re-

futing one more than the other, however well one knew that it could not be hot and cold at once. I was just like a man dropping off to sleep, with his head first nodding forward, and then jerking back.

5 Yet that absurdity is surpassed by another. I found by observation that the practice of these same people was diametrically opposed to their precepts. Those who preached contempt of wealth would hold on to it like grim death, dispute about interest, teach for pay, and sacrifice everything to the main chance, while the depreciators of fame directed all their words and deeds to nothing else but fame; pleasure, which had all their private devotions, they were almost unanimous in condemning.

6 Thus again disappointed of my hope, I was in yet worse case than before; it was slight consolation to reflect that I was in numerous and wise and eminently sensible company, if I was a fool still, all astray in my quest of Truth. One night, while these thoughts kept me sleepless, I resolved to go to Babylon and ask help from one of the Magi, Zoroaster's disciples and successors; I had been told that by incantations and other rites they could open the gates of Hades, take down any one they chose in safety, and bring him up again. I thought the best thing would be to secure the services of one of these, visit Tiresias the Boeotian, and learn from that wise seer what is the best life and the right choice for a man of sense. I got up with all speed and started straight for Babylon. When I arrived, I found a wise and wonderful Chaldean; he was white-haired, with a long imposing beard, and called Mithrobarzanes. My prayers and supplications at last induced him to name a price for conducting me down.

7 Taking me under his charge, he commenced with a new moon, and brought me down for twenty-nine successive mornings to the Euphrates, where he bathed me, apostrophizing the rising

sun in a long formula, of which I never caught much; he gabbled indistinctly, like bad heralds at the Games; but he appeared to be invoking spirits. This charm completed, he spat thrice upon my face, and I went home, not letting my eyes meet those of any one we passed. Our food was nuts and acorns, our drink milk and hydromel and water from the Choaspes, and we slept out of doors on the grass. When he thought me sufficiently prepared, he took me at midnight to the Tigris, purified and rubbed me over, sanctified me with torches and squills and other things, muttering the charm aforesaid, then made a magic circle round me to protect me from ghosts, and finally led me home backwards just as I was; it was now time to arrange our voyage.

He himself put on a magic robe, Median in character, and 8
fetched and gave me the cap, lion's skin, and lyre which you see, telling me if I were asked my name not to say Menippus, but Heracles, Odysseus, or Orpheus.

*Phi.* What was that for? I see no reason either for the get-up or for the choice of names.

*Me.* Oh, obvious enough; there is no mystery in that. He thought that as these three had gone down alive to Hades before us, I might easily elude Aeacus's guard by borrowing their appearance, and be passed as an *habitué*; there is good warrant in the theatre for the efficiency of disguise.

Dawn was approaching when we went down to the river to 9
embark; he had provided a boat, victims, hydromel, and all necessaries for our mystic enterprise. We put all aboard, and then,

Troubled at heart, with welling tears, we went.

For some distance we floated down stream, until we entered the marshy lake in which the Euphrates disappears. Beyond this we came to a desolate, wooded, sunless spot; there we landed, Mithrobarzanes leading the way, and proceeded to dig a pit,

slay our sheep, and sprinkle their blood round the edge. Meanwhile the Mage, with a lighted torch in his hand, abandoning his customary whisper, shouted at the top of his voice an invocation to all spirits, particularly the Poenae and Erinyes,

Hecat's dark might, and dread Persephone,

with a string of other names, outlandish, unintelligible, and polysyllabic.

10 As he ended, there was a great commotion, earth was burst open by the incantation, the barking of Cerberus was heard far off, and all was overcast and lowering;

Quaked in his dark abyss the King of Shades;

for almost all was now unveiled to us, the lake, and Phlegethon, and the abode of Pluto. Undeterred, we made our way down the chasm, and came upon Rhadamanthus half dead with fear. Cerberus barked and looked like getting up; but I quickly touched my lyre, and the first note sufficed to lull him. Reaching the lake, we nearly missed our passage for that time, the ferry-boat being already full; there was incessant lamentation, and all the passengers had wounds upon them; mangled legs, mangled heads, mangled everything; no doubt there was a war going on. Nevertheless, when good Charon saw the lion's skin, taking me for Heracles, he made room, was delighted to give me a passage, and showed us our direction when we got off.

11 We were now in darkness; so Mithrobarzanes led the way, and I followed holding on to him, until we reached a great meadow of asphodel, where the shades of the dead, with their thin voices, came flitting round us. Working gradually on, we reached the court of Minos; he was sitting on a high throne, with the Poenae, Avengers, and Erinyes standing at the sides. From another direction was being brought a long row of persons chained together; I heard that they were adulterers, procurers, publicans, sycophants, informers, and all the filth

that pollutes the stream of life. Separate from them came the rich and usurers, pale, pot-bellied, and gouty, each with a hundredweight of spiked collar upon him. There we stood looking at the proceedings and listening to the pleas they put in; their accusers were orators of a strange and novel species.

*Phi.* Who, in God's name? shrink not; let me know all.

*Me.* It has not escaped your observation that the sun projects certain shadows of our bodies on the ground.

*Phi.* How should it have?

*Me.* These, when we die, are the prosecutors and witnesses who bring home to us our conduct on earth; their constant attendance and absolute attachment to our persons secures them high credit in the witness-box.

Well, Minos carefully examined each prisoner, and sent him 12
off to the place of the wicked to receive punishment proportionate to his transgressions. He was especially severe upon those who, puffed up with wealth and authority, were expecting an almost reverential treatment; he could not away with their ephemeral presumption and superciliousness, their failure to realize the mortality of themselves and their fortunes. Stripped of all that made them glorious, of wealth and birth and power, there they stood naked and downcast, reconstructing their worldly blessedness in their minds like a dream that is gone; the spectacle was meat and drink to me; any that I knew by sight I would come quietly up to, and remind him of his state up here; what a spirit had his been, when morning crowds lined his hall, expectant of his coming, being jostled or thrust out by lacqueys! at last my lord Sun would dawn upon them, in purple or gold or rainbow hues, not unconscious of the bliss he shed upon those who approached, if he let them kiss his breast or his hand. These reminders seemed to annoy them.

Minos, however, did allow his decision to be influenced in one 13

case. Dionysius of Syracuse was accused by Dion of many unholy deeds, and damning evidence was produced by his shadow; he was on the point of being chained to the Chimera, when Aristippus of Cyrene, whose name and influence are great below, got him off on the ground of his constant generosity as a patron of literature.

14 We left the court at last, and came to the place of punishment. Many a piteous sight and sound was there—cracking of whips, shrieks of the burning, rack and gibbet and wheel; Chimera tearing, Cerberus devouring; all tortured together, kings and slaves, governors and paupers, rich and beggars, and all repenting their sins. A few of them, the lately dead, we recognized. These would turn away and shrink from observation; or if they met our eyes, it would be with a slavish cringing glance—how different from the arrogance and contempt that had marked them in life! The poor were allowed half-time in their tortures, respite and punishment alternating. Those with whom legend is so busy I saw with my eyes—Ixion, Sisyphus, the Phrygian Tantalus in all his misery, and the giant Tityus—how vast, his bulk covering a whole field!

15 Leaving these, we entered the Acherusian plain, and there found the demi-gods, men and women both, and the common dead, dwelling in their nations and tribes, some of them ancient and mouldering, 'strengthless heads,' as Homer has it, others fresh, with substance yet in them, Egyptians chiefly, these—so long last their embalming drugs. But to know one from another was no easy task; all are so like when the bones are bared; yet with pains and long scrutiny we could make them out. They lay pell-mell in undistinguished heaps, with none of their earthly beauties left. With all those anatomies piled together as like as could be, eyes glaring ghastly and vacant, teeth gleaming bare, I knew not how to tell Thersites from Nireus the beauty, beggar Irus from the Phaeacian king, or cook

Pyrrhias from Agamemnon's self. Their ancient marks were gone, and their bones alike—uncertain, unlabelled, indistinguishable.

When I saw all this, the life of man came before me under 16
the likeness of a great pageant, arranged and marshalled by Chance, who distributed infinitely varied costumes to the performers. She would take one and array him like a king, with tiara, bodyguard, and crown complete; another she dressed like a slave; one was adorned with beauty, another got up as a ridiculous hunchback; there must be all kinds in the show. Often before the procession was over she made individuals exchange characters; they could not be allowed to keep the same to the end; Croesus must double parts and appear as slave and captive; Maeandrius, starting as slave, would take over Polycrates's despotism, and be allowed to keep his new clothes for a little while. And when the procession is done, every one disrobes, gives up his character with his body, and appears, as he originally was, just like his neighbour. Some, when Chance comes round collecting the properties, are silly enough to sulk and protest, as though they were being robbed of their own instead of only returning loans. You know the kind of thing on the stage—tragic actors shifting as the play requires from Creon to Priam, from Priam to Agamemnon; the same man, very likely, whom you saw just now in all the majesty of Cecrops or Erechtheus, treads the boards next as a slave, because the author tells him to. The play over, each of them throws off his gold-spangled robe and his mask, descends from the buskin's height, and moves a mean ordinary creature; his name is not now Agamemnon son of Atreus or Creon son of Menoeceus, but Polus son of Charicles of Sunium or Satyrus son of Theogiton of Marathon. Such is the condition of mankind, or so that sight presented it to me.

*Phi.* Now, if a man occupies a costly towering sepulchre, or 17

leaves monuments, statues, inscriptions behind him on earth, does not this place him in a class above the common dead ?

*Me.* Nonsense, my good man ; if you had looked on Mausolus himself—the Carian so famous for his tomb—, I assure you, you would never have stopped laughing ; he was a miserable unconsidered unit among the general mass of the dead, flung aside in a dusty hole, with no profit of his sepulchre but its extra weight upon him. No, friend, when Aeacus gives a man his allowance of space—and it never exceeds a foot's breadth—, he must be content to pack himself into its limits. You might have laughed still more if you had beheld the kings and governors of earth begging in Hades, selling salt fish for a living, it might be, or giving elementary lessons, insulted by any one who met them, and cuffed like the most worthless of slaves. When I saw Philip of Macedon, I could not contain myself ; some one showed him to me cobbling old shoes for money in a corner. Many others were to be seen begging—people like Xerxes, Darius, or Polycrates.

18 *Phi.* These royal downfalls are extraordinary—almost incredible. But what of Socrates, Diogenes, and such wise men ?

*Me.* Socrates still goes about proving everybody wrong, the same as ever ; Palamedes, Odysseus, Nestor, and a few other conversational shades, keep him company. His legs, by the way, were still puffy and swollen from the poison. Good Diogenes pitches close to Sardanapalus, Midas, and other specimens of magnificence. The sound of their lamentations and better-day memories keeps him in laughter and spirits ; he is generally stretched on his back roaring out a noisy song which drowns lamentation ; it annoys them, and they are looking out for a new pitch where he may not molest them.

19 *Phi.* I am satisfied. And now for that decree which you told me had been passed against the rich.

*Me.* Well remembered; that was what I meant to tell you about, but I have somehow got far astray. Well, during my stay the presiding officers gave notice of an assembly on matters of general interest. So, when I saw every one flocking to it, I mingled with the shades and constituted myself a member. Various measures were decided upon, and last came this question of the rich. Many grave accusations were preferred against them, including violence, ostentation, pride, injustice; and at last a popular speaker rose and moved this decree.

DECREE

'Whereas the rich are guilty of many illegalities on earth, 20
harrying and oppressing the poor and trampling upon all their rights, it is the pleasure of the Senate and People that after death they shall be punished in their bodies like other malefactors, but their souls shall be sent on earth to inhabit asses, until they have passed in that shape a quarter-million of years, generation after generation, bearing burdens under the tender mercies of the poor; after which they shall be permitted to die. Mover of this decree—Cranion son of Skeletion of the deme Necysia in the Alibantid[1] tribe.' The decree read, a formal vote was taken, in which the people accepted it. A snort from Brimo and a bark from Cerberus completed the proceedings according to the regular form.

So went the assembly. And now, in pursuance of my original 21
design, I went to Tiresias, explained my case fully, and implored him to give me his views upon the best life. He is a blind little old man, pale and weak-voiced. He smiled and said:—'My son, the cause of your perplexity, I know, is the fact that doctors differ; but I may not enlighten you; Rhadamanthus forbids.' 'Ah, say not so, father,' I exclaimed; 'speak out, and

[1] The four names are formed from words meaning skull, skeleton, corpse, anatomy.

leave me not to wander through life in a blindness worse than yours.' So he drew me apart to a considerable distance, and whispered in my ear :—'The life of the ordinary man is the best and most prudent choice; cease from the folly of metaphysical speculation and inquiry into origins and ends, utterly reject their clever logic, count all these things idle talk, and pursue one end alone—how you may do what your hand finds to do, and go your way with ever a smile and never a passion.'

So he, and sought the lawn of asphodel.

22 It was now late, and I told Mithrobarzanes that our work was done, and we might reascend. 'Very well, Menippus,' said he, 'I will show you an easy short cut.' And taking me to a place where the darkness was especially thick, he pointed to a dim and distant ray of light—a mere pencil admitted through a chink. 'There,' he said, 'is the shrine of Trophonius, from which the Boeotian inquirers start; go up that way, and you will be on Grecian soil without more ado.' I was delighted, took my leave of the Mage, crawled with considerable difficulty through the aperture, and found myself, sure enough, at Lebadea. H.

## CHARON

*Hermes. Charon*

*Her.* So gay, Charon? What makes you leave your ferry to come up here? You are quite a stranger in the upper world.

*Ch.* I thought I should like to see what life is like; what men do with it, and what are these blessings of which they all lament the loss when they come down to us. Never one of them has made the passage dry-eyed. So I got leave from Pluto to take a day off, like that Thessalian lad [1], you know; and here I am,

[1] See *Protesilaus* in Notes.

in the light of day. I am in luck, it seems, to fall in with you. You will show me round, of course, and point out all that is to be seen, as you know all about it.

*Her.* I have no time, good ferryman. I am bound on certain errands of the Upper Zeus, certain human matters. He is short-tempered: any loitering on my part, and he may hand me over to you Powers of Darkness for good and all; or treat me as he did Hephaestus the other day—hurl me down headlong from the threshold of Heaven; there would be a pair of lame cupbearers then, to amuse the gods.

*Ch.* And you would leave an old messmate wandering at large on the face of the earth? Think of the cruises we have sailed together, the cargoes you and I have handled! You might remember one thing, son of Maia; I have never set you down to bale or row. You lie sprawling about the deck, you great strong lubber, snoring away, or chatting the whole trip through with any communicative shade you can find; and the old man plies both oars at once. Come, stand by me, like a true son of Zeus as you are, and show me all the ins and outs, there 's a dear lad. I want to see something of life before I go back, and if you leave me in the lurch, I shall be no better off than a blind man: *he* comes to grief because he is always in the dark, and, contrariwise, *I* can make nothing of it in the light. Do me this good turn, and I'll not forget it.

*Her.* Clearly this is to be a flogging matter for me. There 2
will go some shrewd knocks to the settlement of this reckoning. However, I must give you a helping hand. What is one to do, when a friend is so pressing? Now, as to going over everything thoroughly, it is out of the question; it would take us years. Meanwhile, I should have the hue-and-cry out after me, you would be neglecting your ghostly work, Pluto would lose the shades that you ought to be shipping over all that time, and Aeacus would never take a single toll, and would be

proportionately furious. We have only to think, therefore, of contriving you a general view of what is going on.

*Ch.* You must do the best you can for me. I know nothing of the matter, being a stranger up here.

*Her.* The main thing is to get an elevation from which you may see in every direction. If you could come up to Heaven, we should be saved any further trouble; you would then have a good bird's-eye view of everything. But it would be sacrilege for one so conversant with phantoms to set foot in the courts of Zeus. Let us lose no time, therefore, in looking out a good high mountain.

3 *Ch.* You know what I sometimes say to you on the ship, Hermes.—If a sudden gust strikes the sail from a new quarter, and the waves are rising high, you landsmen know not what to make of it; you are for taking in sail, or slackening the sheet, or letting her go before the wind, and then I tell you not to trouble your heads, for *I* know what to do. Well, now it is your turn; you are sailing this ship; do as you think best, and I'll sit quiet, as a passenger should, and obey orders.

*Her.* Just so; leave it to me, and I will find a good look-out. How would Caucasus do? Or is Parnassus higher? Olympus, perhaps, is higher than either of them. Olympus! stay, that reminds me; I have a happy thought. But there is work for two here; I shall want your assistance.

*Ch.* Give your orders. I'll bear a hand, to the best of my ability.

*Her.* Homer tells us how the sons of Aloeus [1] (they were but two, like ourselves) took it into their heads, when they were yet children, to drag up Ossa from its foundations, and plant it on the top of Olympus, and then Pelion on the top of all; they thought that would serve as a ladder for getting into heaven. The two boys were rightly punished for their presumption.

[1] See *Otus* in Notes.

But *we* have no design against the Gods: why should not we take the hint, and make an erection of mountains piled one on the top of another? From such a height we should get a better view.

*Ch.* What, shall we two be able to lift Pelion or Ossa? 4

*Her.* Why not? We are gods; I should hope we are as good as those two infants.

*Ch.* Yes; but I should never have thought we could do such a job as that.

*Her.* Ah, my dear Charon, you don't understand these things; you have no imagination. To the lofty spirit of Homer this is simplicity itself. Just a couple of lines, and the mountains are in place;—we have only to walk up. I wonder you make such a marvel of this. You know Atlas, of course? He holds up the entire heaven by himself, Gods and all. And I dare say you have heard how my brother Heracles relieved him once, and took the burden on his own shoulders for a time?

*Ch.* Yes, I have heard it. But you and the poets best know whether it is true.

*Her.* Oh, perfectly true. What should induce wise men to lie?—Come, let us get to work on Ossa first; for so the master-builder directs:

Ossa first;
On Ossa leafy Pelion.

There! What think you of this? Is it suave work? is it poetry? I must run up, and see whether we shall want another 5 storey. Oh dear, we are no way up as yet. On the East, it is all I can do to make out Ionia and Lydia; on the West is nothing but Italy and Sicily; on the North, nothing to be seen beyond the Danube; and on the South, Crete, none too clear. It looks to me as if we should want Oeta, my nautical friend; and Parnassus into the bargain.

*Ch.* So be it; but take care not to make the height too great for the width; or down we shall come, ladder and all, and pay our footing in the Homeric school of architecture with a cracked crown apiece.

*Her.* No fear; all will be safe enough. Pass Oeta along. Now trundle Parnassus up. There; I'll go up again. . . . That 's better! A fine view. You can come now.

*Ch.* Give me a hand up, Hermes. This *is* an erection, and no mistake!

*Her.* Well, you know, you would see everything. Safety is one thing, my friend, and sight-seeing is another. Here is my hand; hang on, and keep clear of the slippery bits. There, now *you* are up. Let us sit down; here are two peaks, one for each of us. Now take a general look round at the prospect.

6 *Ch.* I see a vast stretch of land, and a huge lake surrounding it, and mountains, and rivers bigger than Cocytus and Pyriphlegethon; and men, tiny little things! and I suppose their dens.

*Her. Dens*? Those are cities!

*Ch.* I tell you what it is, Hermes; all this is no use. Here have we been shifting about Parnassus (Castalia and all complete), and Oeta, and these others, and we might have spared ourselves the trouble!

*Her.* How so?

*Ch.* Why, I can make nothing out up here. These cities and mountains look for all the world like a map. It is *men* that I am after; I want to see what they do, and hear what they say. That is what I was laughing about just now, when first you met me, and asked me what the joke was. I had heard something that tickled me hugely.

*Her.* And what might that be?

*Ch.* One of them had been asked by a friend to dinner, I think it was, the next day. 'Depend on it,' says he, 'I'll be

with you.' And before the words were out of his mouth, down came a tile—started somehow from the roof—and he was a dead man! Ha, ha, thought I, *that* promise will never be kept.—So I think I shall go down again; I want to see and hear.

*Her.* Sit where you are. I will soon put that right; you 7
shall see with the best; Homer has a charm for this too. Now, the moment I say the lines, there must be no more dull eyes; all must be clear as daylight. Don't forget!

*Ch.* Say on.

*Her.* See, from before thine eyes I lift the veil;
So shalt thou clearly know both God and man.

Well? Are the eyes any better?

*Ch.* A marvellous improvement! Lynceus is blind to me. Now, the next thing I want is information. I have some questions to ask. Will you have them couched in the Homeric style, to convince you that I am not wholly unversed in his poems?

*Her.* And how should you know anything of Homer? A seaman, chained to the oar!

*Ch.* Come, come; no abuse of my profession. The fact is, when he died, and I ferried him over, I heard a good many of his ballads, and a few of them still run in my head. There was a pretty stiff gale on at the time, too. You see, he began singing a song about Posidon, which boded no good to us mariners,—how Posidon gathered the clouds, and stirred the depths with his trident, as with a ladle, and roused the whirlwind, and a good deal more (enough to raise a storm of itself),—when suddenly there came a black squall which nearly capsized the boat. The poet was extremely ill, and disgorged such an avalanche of minstrelsy (Scylla, Charybdis, the Cyclops, all came up bodily), that I had no difficulty in preserving a few snatches. I should like to know, for instance, 8

Who is yon hero, stout and strong and tall,
O'ertopping all mankind by head and shoulders?

*Her.* That is Milo of Croton, the athlete. He has just picked up a bull, and is carrying it along the race-course; and the Greeks are applauding him.

*Ch.* It would be more to the point, if they were to offer their congratulations to *me*. I shall presently be picking up Milo himself, and putting him into my boat; that will be after he has had his fall from Death, that most invincible of antagonists, who will have him on his back before he knows what is happening. We shall hear a sad tale then, no doubt, of the crowns and the applause he has left behind him. Meanwhile, he is mightily elated over the bull exploit, and the distinction it has won him. What is one to think? Does it ever occur to him that he must *die* some day?

*Her.* How should he think of death? He is at his zenith.

*Ch.* Well, never mind him. We shall have sport enough with him before long; he will come aboard with no strength
9 left to pick up a gnat, let alone a bull. But pray,

Who is yon haughty hero?

No Greek, to judge by his dress.

*Her.* That is Cyrus, son of Cambyses, who transferred to the Persians the ancient empire of the Medes. He has lately conquered Assyria, and reduced Babylon; and now it looks as if he meditated an invasion of Lydia, to complete his dominion by the overthrow of Croesus.

*Ch.* And whereabouts is Croesus?

*Her.* Look over there. You see the great city with the triple wall? That is Sardis. And there, look, is Croesus himself, reclining on a golden couch, and conversing with Solon the Athenian. Shall we listen to what they are saying?

*Ch.* Yes, let us.

10 *Cr. Stranger, you have now seen my stores of treasure, my heaps*

*of bullion, and all my riches. Tell me therefore, whom do you account the happiest of mankind?*

*Ch.* What will Solon say, I wonder?

*Her.* Trust Solon; he will not disgrace himself.

*So. Croesus, few men are happy. Of those whom I know, the happiest, I think, were Cleobis and Biton, the sons of the Argive priestess.*

*Ch.* Ah, he means those two who yoked themselves to a waggon, and drew their mother to the temple, and died the moment after. It was but the other day.

*Cr. Ah. So they are first on the list. And who comes next?*

*So. Tellus the Athenian, who lived a righteous life, and died for his country.*

*Cr. And where do I come, reptile?*

*So. That I am unable to say at present, Croesus; I must see you end your days first. Death is the sure test;—a happy end to a life of happiness.*

*Ch.* Bravo, Solon; *you* have not forgotten us! As you say, Charon's ferry is the proper place for the decision of these questions.—But who are these men whom Croesus is sending 11
out? And what have they got on their shoulders?

*Her.* Those are bars of gold; they are going to Delphi, to pay for an oracle, which oracle will presently be the ruin of Croesus. But oracles are a hobby of his.

*Ch.* Oh, so that is *gold*, that glittering yellow stuff, with just a tinge of red in it. I have often heard of gold, but never saw it before.

*Her.* Yes, that is the stuff there is so much talking and squabbling about.

*Ch.* Well now, I see no advantages about it, unless it is an advantage that it is heavy to carry.

*Her.* Ah, you do not know what it has to answer for; the wars and plots and robberies, the perjuries and murders; for

this men will endure slavery and imprisonment; for this they traffic and sail the seas.

*Ch.* For this stuff? Why, it is not much different from copper. I know copper, of course, because I get a penny from each passenger.

*Her.* Yes, but copper is plentiful, and therefore not much esteemed by men. Gold is found only in small quantities, and the miners have to go to a considerable depth for it. For the rest, it comes out of the earth, just the same as lead and other metals.

*Ch.* What fools men must be, to be enamoured of an object of this sallow complexion; and of such a weight!

*Her.* Well, Solon, at any rate, seems to have no great affection for it. See, he is making merry with Croesus and his outlandish magnificence. I think he is going to ask him a question. Listen.

12 *So. Croesus, will those bars be any use to Apollo, do you think?*

*Cr. Any use! Why there is nothing at Delphi to be compared to them.*

*So. And that is all that is wanting to complete his happiness, eh?—some bar gold?*

*Cr. Undoubtedly.*

*So. Then they must be very hard up in Heaven, if they have to send all the way to Lydia for their gold supply?*

*Cr. Where else is gold to be had in such abundance as with us?*

*So. Now is any iron found in Lydia?*

*Cr. Not much.*

*So. Ah; so you are lacking in the more valuable metal.*

*Cr. More valuable? Iron more valuable than gold?*

*So. Bear with me, while I ask you a few questions, and I will convince you it is so.*

*Cr. Well?*

*So. Of protector and protégé, which is the better man?*

*Cr. The protector, of course.*

*So. Now in the event of Cyrus's invading Lydia—there is some talk of it—shall you supply your men with golden swords? or will iron be required on the occasion?*

*Cr. Oh, iron.*

*So. Iron accordingly you must have, or your gold would be led captive into Persia?*

*Cr. Blasphemer!*

*So. Oh, we will hope for the best. But it is clear, on your own admission, that iron is better than gold.*

*Cr. And what would you have me do? Recall the gold, and offer the God bars of iron?*

*So.* He *has no occasion for iron either. Your offering (be the metal what it may) will fall into other hands than his. It will be snapped up by the Phocians, or the Boeotians, or the God's own priests; or by some tyrant or robber. Your goldsmiths have no interest for Apollo.*

*Cr. You are always having a stab at my wealth. It is all envy!*

*Her.* This blunt sincerity is not to the Lydian's taste. Things 13
are come to a strange pass, he thinks, if a poor man is to hold up his head, and speak his mind in this frank manner! He will remember Solon presently, when the time comes for Cyrus to conduct him in chains to the pyre. I heard Clotho, the other day, reading over the various dooms. Among other things, Croesus was to be led captive by Cyrus, and Cyrus to be murdered by the queen of the Massagetae. There she is: that Scythian woman, riding on a white horse; do you see?

*Ch.* Yes.

*Her.* That is Tomyris. She will cut off Cyrus's head, and put it into a wine-skin filled with blood. And do you see his son, the boy there? That is Cambyses. He will succeed to his father's throne; and, after innumerable defeats in Libya

and Ethiopia, will finally slay the god Apis, and die a raving madman.

*Ch.* What fun! Why, at this moment no one would presume to meet their eyes; from such a height do they look down on the rest of mankind. Who would believe that before long one of them will be a captive, and the other have his head in a bottle
14 of blood?—But who is that in the purple robe, Hermes?—the one with the diadem? His cook has just been cleaning a fish, and is now handing him a ring,—'in yonder sea-girt isle'; ''tis, sure, some king.'

*Her.* Ha, ha! A parody, this time.—That is Polycrates, tyrant of Samos. He is extremely well pleased with his lot: yet that slave who now stands at his side will betray him to the satrap Oroetes, and he will be crucified. It will not take long to overturn *his* prosperity, poor man! This, too, I had from Clotho.

*Ch.* I like Clotho; she is a lady of spirit. Have at them, madam! Off with their heads! To the cross with them! Let them know that they are men. And let them be exalted in the meantime; the higher they mount, the heavier will be the fall. I shall have a merry time of it hereafter, identifying their naked shades, as they come aboard; no more purple robes then; no tiaras; no golden couches!

15 *Her.* So much for royalty; and now to the common herd. Do you see them, Charon;—on their ships and on the field of battle; crowding the law-courts and following the plough; usurers here, beggars there?

*Ch.* I see them. What a jostling life it is! What a world of ups and downs! Their cities remind me of bee-hives. Every man keeps a sting for his neighbour's service; and a few, like wasps, make spoil of their weaker brethren. But what are all these misty shapes that beset them on every side?

*Her.* Hopes, Fears, Follies, Pleasures, Greeds, Hates, Grudges,

and such like. They differ in their habits. The Folly is a domestic creature, with vested rights of its own. The same with the Grudge, the Hate, the Envy, the Greed, the Know-not, and the What's-to-do. But the Fear and the Hope fly overhead. The Fear swoops on its prey from above; sometimes it is content with startling a man out of his wits, sometimes it frightens him in real earnest. The Hope hovers almost within reach, and just when a man thinks he is going to catch it, off it flies, and leaves him gaping—like Tantalus in the water, you know. Now look closely, and you will make out 16
the Fates up aloft, spinning each man his spindle-full; from that spindle a man hangs by a narrow thread. Do you see what looks like a cobweb, coming down to each man from the spindles?

*Ch.* I see each has a very slight thread. They are mostly entangled, one with another, and that other with a third.

*Her.* Of course they are. Because the first man has got to be murdered by the second, and he by the third; or again, B is to be A's heir (A's thread being the shorter), and C is to be B's. That is what the entangling means. But you see what thin threads they all have to depend on. Now here is one drawn high up into the air; presently his thread will snap, when the weight becomes too much for it, and down he will come with a bang: whereas yonder fellow hangs so low that when he does fall it makes no noise; his next-door neighbours will scarcely hear him drop.

*Ch.* How absurd it all is!

*Her.* My dear Charon, there is no word for the absurdity of 17
it. They do take it all so seriously, that is the best of it; and then, long before they have finished scheming, up comes good old Death, and whisks them off, and all is over! You observe that he has a fine staff of assistants at his command;—agues, consumptions, fevers, inflammations, swords, robbers, hemlock,

juries, tyrants,—not one of which gives them a moment's concern so long as they are prosperous; but when they come to grief, then it is Alack! and Well-a-day! and Oh dear me! If only they would start with a clear understanding that they are mortal, that after a brief sojourn on the earth they will wake from the dream of life, and leave all behind them,—they would live more sensibly, and not mind dying so much. As it is, they get it into their heads that what they possess they possess for good and all; the consequence is, that when Death's officer calls for them, and claps on a fever or a consumption, they take it amiss; the parting is so wholly unexpected. Yonder is a man building his house, urging the workmen to use all dispatch. How would he take the news, that he was just to see the roof on and all complete, when he would have to take his departure, and leave all the enjoyment to his heir?—hard fate, not once to sup beneath it! There again is one rejoicing over the birth of a son; the child is to inherit his grandfather's name, and the father is celebrating the occasion with his friends. He would not be so pleased, if he knew that the boy was to die before he was eight years old! It is natural enough: he sees before him some happy father of an Olympian victor, and has no eyes for his neighbour there, who is burying a child; *that* thin-spun thread escapes his notice. Behold, too, the money-grubbers, whom the aforesaid Death's-officers will never permit to be money-spenders; and the noble army of litigant neighbours!

18 *Ch.* Yes! I see it all; and I ask myself, what is the satisfaction in life? What is it that men bewail the loss of? Take their kings; they seem to be best off, though, as you say, they have their happiness on a precarious tenure; but apart from that, we shall find their pleasures to be outweighed by the vexations inseparable from their position—worry and anxiety, flattery here, conspiracy there, enmity everywhere; to say

nothing of the tyranny of Sorrow, Disease, and Passion, with whom there is confessedly no respect of persons. And if the king's lot is a hard one, we may make a pretty shrewd guess at that of the commoner. Come now, I will give you a similitude 19 for the life of man. Have you ever stood at the foot of a waterfall, and marked the bubbles rising to the surface and gathering into foam? Some are quite small, and break as soon as they are born. Others last longer; new ones come to join them, and they swell up to a great size: yet in the end they burst, as surely as the rest; it cannot be otherwise. There you have human life. All men are bubbles, great or small, inflated with the breath of life. Some are destined to last for a brief space, others perish in the very moment of birth: but all must inevitably burst.

*Her.* Homer compares mankind to leaves. Your simile is full as good as his.

*Ch.* And being the things they are, they do—the things you 20 see; squabbling among themselves, and contending for dominion and power and riches, all of which they will have to leave behind them, when they come down to us with their penny apiece. Now that we are up here, how would it be for me to cry out to them at the top of my voice, to abstain from their vain endeavours, and live with the prospect of Death before their eyes? 'Fools' (I might say), 'why so much in earnest? Rest from your toils. You will not live for ever. Nothing of the pomp of this world will endure; nor can any man take anything hence when he dies. He will go naked out of the world, and his house and his lands and his gold will be another's, and ever another's.' If I were to call out something of this sort, loud enough for them to hear, would it not do some good? Would not the world be the better for it?

*Her.* Ah, my poor friend, you know not what you say. Ignor- 21 ance and deceit have done for them what Odysseus did for his

crew when he was afraid of the Sirens; they have waxed men's ears up so effectually, that no drill would ever open them. How then should they hear you? You might shout till your lungs gave way. Ignorance is as potent here as the waters of Lethe are with you. There are a few, to be sure, who from a regard for Truth have refused the wax process; men whose eyes are open to discern good and evil.

*Ch.* Well then, we might call out to *them*?

*Her.* There again: where would be the use of telling them what they know already? See, they stand aloof from the rest of mankind, and scoff at all that goes on; nothing is as they would have it. Nay, they are evidently bent on giving life the slip, and joining you. Their condemnations of folly make them unpopular here.

*Ch.* Well done, my brave boys! There are not many of them, though, Hermes.

*Her.* These must serve. And now let us go down.

22 *Ch.* There is still one thing I had a fancy to see. Show me the receptacles into which they put the corpses, and your office will have been discharged.

*Her.* Ah, *sepulchres*, those are called, or *tombs*, or *graves*. Well, do you see those mounds, and columns, and pyramids, outside the various city walls? Those are the store-chambers of the dead.

*Ch.* Why, they are putting flowers on the stones, and pouring costly essences upon them. And in front of some of the mounds they have piled up faggots, and dug trenches. Look: there is a splendid banquet laid out, and they are burning it all; and pouring wine and mead, I suppose it is, into the trenches! What does it all mean?

*Her.* What satisfaction it affords to their friends in Hades, I am unable to say. But the idea is, that the shades come up, and get as close as they can, and feed upon the savoury steam of the meat, and drink the mead in the trench.

*Ch.* Eat and drink, when their skulls are dry bone? But I am wasting my breath: you bring them down every day;—*you* can say whether they are likely ever to get up again, once they are safely underground! That would be too much of a good thing! You would have your work cut out for you and no mistake, if you had not only to bring them down, but also to take them up again when they wanted a drink. Oh, fools and blockheads! You little know how we arrange matters, or what a gulf is set betwixt the living and the dead!

> The buried and unburied, both are Death's.
> He ranks alike the beggar and the king;
> Thersites sits by fair-haired Thetis' son.
> Naked and withered roam the fleeting shades
> Together through the fields of asphodel.

*Her.* Bless me, what a deluge of Homer! And now I think 23
of it, I must show you Achilles's tomb. There it is on the Trojan shore, at Sigeum. And across the water is Rhoeteum, where Ajax lies buried.

*Ch.* Rather small tombs, considering. Now show me the great cities, those that we hear talked about in Hades; Nineveh, Babylon, Mycenae, Cleonae, and Troy itself. I shipped numbers across from there, I remember. For ten years running I had no time to haul my boat up and clean it.

*Her.* Why, as to Nineveh, it is gone, friend, long ago, and has left no trace behind it; there is no saying whereabouts it may have been. But there is Babylon, with its fine battlements and its enormous wall. Before long it will be as hard to find as Nineveh. As to Mycenae and Cleonae, I am ashamed to show them to you, let alone Troy. You will throttle Homer, for certain, when you get back, for puffing them so. They were prosperous cities, too, in their day; but they have gone the way of all flesh. Cities, my friend, die, just like men;

stranger still, so do rivers! Inachus is gone from Argos—not a puddle left.

*Ch.* Oh, Homer, Homer! You and your 'holy Troy,' and your 'city of broad streets,' and your 'strong-walled Cleonae'!
24 —By the way, what is that battle going on over there? What are they murdering one another about?

*Her.* It is between the Argives and the Lacedaemonians. The general who lies there half-dead, writing an inscription on the trophy with his own blood, is Othryades.

*Ch.* And what were they fighting for?

*Her.* For the field of battle, neither more nor less.

*Ch.* The fools! Not to know that though each one of them should win to himself a whole Peloponnesus, he will get but a bare foot of ground from Aeacus! As to yonder plain, one nation will till it after another, and many a time will that trophy be turned up by the plough.

*Her.* Even so. And now let us get down, and put these mountains to rights again. After which, I must be off on my errand, and you back to your ferry. You will see me there before long, with the day's contingent of shades.

*Ch.* I am much obliged to you, Hermes; the service shall be perpetuated in my records. Thanks to you, my outing has been a success. Dear, dear, what a world it is!—And never a word of Charon! F.

## OF SACRIFICE

Methinks that man must lie sore stricken under the hand of sorrow, who has not a smile left for the folly of his superstitious brethren, when he sees them at work on sacrifice and festival and worship of the gods, hears the subject of their prayers, and marks the nature of their creed. Nor, I fancy, will a smile

be all. He will first have a question to ask himself: Is he to call them devout worshippers or very outcasts, who think so meanly of God as to suppose that he can require anything at the hand of man, can take pleasure in their flattery, or be wounded by their neglect? Thus the afflictions of the Calydonians, that long tale of misery and violence, ending with the death of Meleager—all is attributed to the resentment of Artemis, at Oeneus's neglect in not inviting her to a feast. She must have taken the disappointment very much to heart. I fancy I see her, poor Goddess, left all alone in Heaven, after the rest have set out for Calydon, brooding darkly over the fine spread at which she will not be present. Those Ethiopians, too; 2
privileged, thrice-happy mortals! Zeus, one supposes, is not unmindful of the handsome manner in which they entertained him and all his family for twelve days running. With the Gods, clearly, nothing goes for nothing. Each blessing has its price. Health is to be had, say, for a calf; wealth, for a couple of yoke of oxen; a kingdom, for a hecatomb. A safe conduct from Troy to Pylos has fetched as much as nine bulls, and a passage from Aulis to Troy has been quoted at a princess. For six yoke of oxen and a robe, Athene sold Hecuba a reprieve for Troy; and it is to be presumed that a cock, a garland, a handful of frankincense, will each buy something.

Chryses, that experienced divine and eminent theologian, 3
seems to have realized this principle. Returning from his fruitless visit to Agamemnon, he approaches Apollo with the air of a creditor, and demands repayment of his loan. His attitude is one of remonstrance, almost. 'Good Apollo,' he cries, 'here have I been garlanding your temple, where never garland hung before, and burning unlimited thigh-pieces of bulls and goats upon your altars: yet when I suffer wrong, you take no heed; you count my benefactions as nothing worth.' The God is quite put out of countenance: he seizes his bow,

settles down in the harbour and smites the Achaeans with shafts of pestilence, them and their mules and their dogs.

4 And now that I have mentioned Apollo, I cannot refrain from an allusion to certain other passages in his life, which are recorded by the sages. With his unfortunate love affairs—the sad end of Hyacinth, and the cruelty of Daphne—we are not concerned. But when that vote of censure was passed on him for the slaughter of the Cyclopes, he was dismissed from Heaven, and condemned to share the fortunes of men upon earth. It was then that he served Admetus in Thessaly, and Laomedon in Phrygia; and in the latter service he was not alone. He and Posidon together, since better might not be, made bricks and built the walls of Troy; and did not even get their full wages;—the Phrygian, it is said, remained their debtor for no less a sum than five-and-twenty shillings Trojan,

5 and odd pence. These, and yet holier mysteries than these, are the high themes of our poets. They tell of Hephaestus and of Prometheus; of Cronus and Rhea, and well-nigh all the family of Zeus. And as they never commence their poems without bespeaking the assistance of the Muses, we must conclude that it is under that divine inspiration that they sing, how Cronus unmanned his father Uranus, and was king in his room; and how, like Argive Thyestes, he swallowed his own children; and how thereafter Rhea saved Zeus by the fraud of the stone, and the child was exposed in Crete, and suckled by a goat, as Telephus was by a hind, and Cyrus the Great by a bitch; and how he dethroned his father, and threw him into prison, and was king; and of his many wives, and how finally (like a Persian or an Assyrian) he married his own sister Hera; and of his love adventures, and how he peopled the Heaven with gods, ay, and with demi-gods, the rogue! for he wooed the daughters of earth, appearing to them now in a shower of gold, now in the form of a bull or a swan or an

eagle; a very Proteus for versatility. Once, and only once, he conceived within his own brain, and gave birth to Athene. For Dionysus, they say, he tore from the womb of Semele before the fire had yet consumed her, and hid the child within his thigh, till the time of travail was come.

Similarly, we find Hera conceiving without external assist- 6
ance, and giving birth to Hephaestus; no child of fortune he, but a base mechanic, living all his life at the forge, soot-begrimed as any stoker. He is not even sound of limb; he has been lame ever since Zeus threw him down from Heaven. Fortunately for us the Lemnians broke his fall, or there would have been an end of him, as surely as there was of Astyanax when he was flung from the battlements. But Hephaestus is nothing to Prometheus. Who knows not the sorrows of that officious philanthropist? How he too fell a victim to the wrath of Zeus, and was carried into Scythia, and nailed up on Caucasus, with an eagle to keep him company and make daily havoc of his liver? However, *there* was a reckoning settled, at any 7
rate. But Rhea, now! We cannot, I think, pass over her conduct unnoticed. It is surely most discreditable;—a lady of her venerable years, the mother of such a family, still feeling the pangs of love and jealousy, and carrying her beloved Attis about with her in the lion-drawn car,—and he so ill qualified to play the lover's part! After that, we can but wink, if we find Aphrodite making a slip, or Selene time after time pulling up in mid-career to pay a visit to Endymion.

But enough of scandal. Borne on the wings of poesy, let us 8
take flight for Heaven itself, as Homer and Hesiod have done before us, and see how all is disposed up there. The vault is of brass on the under side, as we know from Homer. But climb over the edge, and take a peep up. You are now actually in Heaven. Observe the increase of light; here is a purer Sun, and brighter stars; daylight is everywhere, and the floor is of

gold. We arrive first at the abode of the Seasons; they are the portresses of Heaven. Then we have Iris and Hermes, the servants and messengers of Zeus; and next Hephaestus's smithy, which is stocked with all manner of cunning contrivances. Last come the dwellings of the Gods, and the palace of Zeus. All are the work of Hephaestus; and noble work it is.

9 Hard by the throne of Zeus
(I suppose we must adapt our language to our altitude)
sit all the gods.

Their eyes are turned downwards; intently they search every corner of the earth; is there nowhere a fire to be seen, or the steam of burnt-offerings

. . . in eddying clouds upborne?

If a sacrifice is going forward, all mouths are open to feast upon the smoke; like flies they settle on the altar to drink up the trickling streams of blood. If they are dining at home, nectar and ambrosia is the bill of fare. In ancient days, mortals have eaten and drunk at their table. Such were Ixion and Tantalus; but they forgot their manners, and talked too much. They are paying the penalty for it to this day; and since then mortals have been excluded from Heaven.

10 The life of the Gods being such as I have described, our religious ordinances are in admirable harmony with the divine requirements. Our first care has been to supply each God with his sacred grove, his holy hill, and his own peculiar bird or plant. The next step was to assign them their various sacred cities. Apollo has the freedom of Delphi and Delos, Athene that of Athens (there is no disputing *her* nationality); Hera is an Argive, Rhea a Mygdonian, Aphrodite a Paphian. As for Zeus, he is a Cretan born and bred—and buried, as any native of that island will show you. It was a mistake of ours to suppose that Zeus was dispensing the thunder and the rain and the

rest of it;—he has been lying snugly underground in Crete all this time.

As it would never have done to leave the Gods without a 11
hearth and home, temples were now erected, and the services of Phidias, Polyclitus, and Praxiteles were called in to create images in their likeness. Chance glimpses of their originals (but where obtained I know not) enabled these artists to do justice to the beard of Zeus, the perpetual youth of Apollo, the down on Hermes's cheek, Posidon's sea-green hair, and Athene's flashing eyes; with the result that on entering the temple of Zeus men believe that they see before them, not Indian ivory, nor gold from a Thracian mine, but the veritable son of Cronus and Rhea, translated to earth by the hand of Phidias, with instructions to keep watch over the deserted plains of Pisa, and content with his lot, if, once in four years, a spectator of the games can snatch a moment to pay him sacrifice.

And now the altars stand ready; proclamation has been 12
made, and lustration duly performed. The victims are accordingly brought forward—an ox from the plough, a ram or a goat, according as the worshipper is a farmer, a shepherd, or a goatherd; sometimes it is only frankincense or a honey cake; nay, a poor man may conciliate the God by merely kissing his hand. But it is with the priests that we are concerned. They first make sure that the victim is without blemish, and worthy of the sacrificial knife; then they crown him with garlands and lead him to the altar, where he is slaughtered before the God's eyes, to the broken accompaniment of his own sanctimonious bellowings, most musical, most melancholy. The delight of the Gods at such a spectacle, who can doubt?

According to the proclamation, no man shall approach the 13
holy ground with *unclean hands*. Yet there stands the priest himself, wallowing in gore; handling his knife like a very Cyclops, drawing out entrails and heart, sprinkling the altar

with blood,—in short, omitting no detail of his holy office. Finally, he kindles fire, and sets the victim bodily thereon, sheep or goat, unfleeced, unflayed. A godly steam, and fit for godly nostrils, rises heavenwards, and drifts to each quarter of the sky. The Scythian, by the way, will have nothing to do with paltry cattle: he offers *men* to Artemis; and the offering is appreciated.

14 But all this, and all that Assyria, Phrygia, and Lydia can show, amounts to nothing much. If you would see the Gods in their glory, fit denizens of Heaven, you must go to Egypt. There you will find that Zeus has sprouted ram's horns, our old friend Hermes has the muzzle of a dog, and Pan is perfect goat; ibis, crocodile, ape,—each is a God in disguise,

And wouldst thou know the truth that lurks herein?

If so, you will find no lack of sages and scribes and shaven priests to inform you (after expulsion of the *profanum vulgus*) how, when the Giants and their other enemies rose against them, the Gods fled to Egypt to hide themselves, and there took the form of goat and ram, of bird and reptile, which forms they preserve to this day. Of all this they have documentary evidence, dating from thousands of years back, stored up in their temples.

15 Their sacrifices differ from others only in this respect, that they go into mourning for the victim, slaying him first, and beating their breasts for grief afterwards, and (in some parts) burying him as soon as he is killed. When their great god Apis dies, off comes every man's hair, however much he values himself on it; though he had the purple lock of Nisus, it would make no difference: he must show a sad crown on the occasion, if he die for it. It is as the result of an election that each succeeding Apis leaves his pasture for the temple; his superior beauty and majestic bearing prove that he is something more than bull.

On such absurdities as these, such vulgar credulity, remon-

strance would be thrown away; a Heraclitus would best meet the case, or a Democritus; for the ignorance of these men is as laughable as their folly is deplorable. F.

## SALE OF CREEDS[1]

*Zeus. Hermes. Several Dealers. Creeds*

*Zeus.* Now get those benches straight there, and make the place fit to be seen. Bring up the lots, one of you, and put them in line. Give them a rub up first, though; we must have them looking their best, to attract bidders. Hermes, you can declare the sale-room open, and a welcome to all comers.—*For Sale! A varied assortment of Live Creeds. Tenets of every description.—Cash on delivery; or credit allowed on suitable security.*

*Hermes.* Here they come, swarming in. No time to lose; we must not keep them waiting.

*Zeus.* Well, let us begin.

*Her.* What are we to put up first? 2

*Zeus.* The Ionic fellow, with the long hair. He seems a showy piece of goods.

*Her.* Step up, Pythagoreanism, and show yourself.

*Zeus.* Go ahead.

*Her.* Now here is a creed of the first water. Who bids for this handsome article? What gentleman says Superhumanity? Harmony of the Universe! Transmigration of souls! Who bids?

*First Dealer.* He looks all right. And what can he do?

[1] The distinction between the personified creeds or philosophies here offered for sale, and their various founders or principal exponents, is but loosely kept up. Not only do most of the creeds bear the names of their founders, but some are even credited with their physical peculiarities and their personal experiences.

*Her.* Magic, music, arithmetic, geometry, astronomy, jugglery. Prophecy in all its branches.

*First D.* Can I ask him some questions ?

*Her.* Ask away, and welcome.

3 *First D.* Where do you come from ?

*Py.* Samos.

*First D.* Where did you get your schooling ?

*Py.* From the sophists in Egypt.

*First D.* If I buy you, what will you teach me ?

*Py.* Nothing. I will remind you.

*First D.* Remind me ?

*Py.* But first I shall have to cleanse your soul of its filth.

*First D.* Well, suppose the cleansing process complete. How is the reminding done ?

*Py.* We shall begin with a long course of silent contemplation. Not a word to be spoken for five years.

*First D.* You would have been just the creed for Croesus's son! But *I* have a tongue in my head; I have no ambition to be a statue. And after the five years' silence ?

*Py.* You will study music and geometry.

*First D.* A charming recipe! The way to be wise: learn the guitar.

4 *Py.* Next you will learn to count.

*First D.* I can do that already.

*Py.* Let me hear you.

*First D.* One, two, three, four,—

*Py.* There you are, you see. *Four* (as you call it) is *ten*. Four the perfect triangle. Four the oath of our school.

*First D.* Now by Four, most potent Four!—higher and holier mysteries than these I never heard.

*Py.* Then you will learn of Earth, Air, Fire, and Water; their action, their movement, their shapes.

*First D.* Have Fire and Air and Water *shapes* ?

*Py.* Clearly. That cannot move which lacks shape and form. You will also find that God is a number; an intelligence; a harmony.

*First D.* You surprise me.

*Py.* More than this, you have to learn that you yourself are not the person you appear to be.

*First D.* What, I am some one else, not the I who am speaking to you?

*Py.* You are that you now: but you have formerly inhabited another body, and borne another name. And in course of time you will change once more.

*First D.* Why then I shall be immortal, and take one shape after another? But enough of this. And now what is your diet?

*Py.* Of living things I eat none. All else I eat, except beans.

*First D.* And why no beans? Do you dislike them?

*Py.* No. But they are sacred things. Their nature is a mystery. Consider them first in their generative aspect; take a green one and peel it, and you will see what I mean. Again, boil one and expose it to moonlight for a proper number of nights, and you have—blood. What is more, the Athenians use beans to vote with.

*First D.* Admirable! A very feast of reason. Now just strip, and let me see what you are like. Bless me, here is a creed with a golden thigh! He is no mortal, he is a God. I must have him at any price. What do you start him at?

*Her.* Forty pounds.

*First D.* He is mine for forty pounds.

*Zeus.* Take the gentleman's name and address.

*Her.* He must come from Italy, I should think; Croton or Tarentum, or one of the Greek towns in those parts. But he is not the only buyer. Some three hundred of them have clubbed together.

*Zeus.* They are welcome to him. Now up with the next.

7 *Her.* What about yonder grubby Pontian[1] ?

*Zeus.* Yes, he will do.

*Her.* You there with the wallet and cloak ; come along, walk round the room. Lot No. 2. A most sturdy and valiant creed, free-born. What offers ?

*Second D.* Hullo, Mr. Auctioneer, are you going to sell a free man ?

*Her.* That was the idea

*Second D.* Take care, he may have you up for kidnapping. This might be matter for the Areopagus.

*Her.* Oh, he would as soon be sold as not. He feels just as free as ever.

*Second D.* But what is one to do with such a dirty fellow ? He is a pitiable sight. One might put him to dig perhaps, or to carry water.

*Her.* That he can do and more. Set him to guard your house, and you will find him better than any watch-dog.—They call him Dog for short.

*Second D.* Where does he come from ? and what is his method ?

*Her.* He can best tell you that himself.

*Second D.* I don't like his looks. He will probably snarl if I go near him, or take a snap at me, for all I know. See how he lifts his stick, and scowls ; an awkward-looking customer !

*Her.* Don't be afraid. He is quite tame.

8 *Second D.* Tell me, good fellow, where do you come from ?

*Dio.* Everywhere.

*Second D.* What does that mean ?

*Dio.* It means that I am a citizen of the world.

*Second D.* And your model ?

*Dio.* Heracles.

[1] See *Diogenes* in Notes.

*Second D.* Then why no lion's-skin? You have the orthodox club.

*Dio.* My cloak is my lion's-skin. Like Heracles, I live in a state of warfare, and my enemy is Pleasure; but unlike him I am a volunteer. My purpose is to purify humanity.

*Second D.* A noble purpose. Now what do I understand to be your strong subject? What is your profession?

*Dio.* The liberation of humanity, and the treatment of the passions. In short, I am the prophet of Truth and Candour.

*Second D.* Well, prophet; and if I buy you, how shall you 9
handle my case?

*Dio.* I shall commence operations by stripping off your superfluities, putting you into fustian, and leaving you closeted with Necessity. Then I shall give you a course of hard labour. You will sleep on the ground, drink water, and fill your belly as best you can. Have you money? Take my advice and throw it into the sea. With wife and children and country you will not concern yourself; there will be no more of that nonsense. You will exchange your present home for a sepulchre, a ruin, or a tub. What with lupines and close-written tomes, your knapsack will never be empty; and you will vote yourself happier than any king. Nor will you esteem it any inconvenience, if a flogging or a turn of the rack should fall to your lot.

*Second D.* How! Am I a tortoise, a lobster, that I should be flogged and feel it not?

*Dio.* You will take your cue from Hippolytus; *mutatis mutandis.*

*Second D.* How so?

*Dio.* 'The heart may burn, the tongue knows nought thereof'[1]. 10

[1] Hippolytus (in Euripides's play of that name) is reproached with having broken an oath, and thus defends himself: 'The tongue hath sworn: the heart knew nought thereof.'

Above all, be bold, be impudent; distribute your abuse impartially to king and commoner. They will admire your spirit. You will talk the Cynic jargon with the true Cynic snarl, scowling as you walk, and walking as one should who scowls; an epitome of brutality. Away with modesty, good-nature, and forbearance. Wipe the blush from your cheek for ever. Your hunting-ground will be the crowded city. You will live alone in its midst, holding communion with none, admitting neither friend nor guest; for such would undermine your power. Scruple not to perform the deeds of darkness in broad daylight: select your love-adventures with a view to the public entertainment: and finally, when the fancy takes you, swallow a raw cuttle-fish, and die. Such are the delights of Cynicism.

11 *Second D.* Oh, vile creed! Monstrous creed! Avaunt!

*Dio.* But look you, it is all so easy; it is within every man's reach. No education is necessary, no nonsensical argumentation. I offer you a short cut to Glory. You may be the merest clown—cobbler, fishmonger, carpenter, money-changer; yet there is nothing to prevent your becoming famous. Given brass and boldness, you have only to learn to wag your tongue with dexterity.

*Second D.* All this is of no use to me. But I might make a sailor or a gardener of you at a pinch; that is, if you are to be had cheap. Three-pence is the most I can give.

*Her.* He is yours, to have and to hold. And good riddance to the brawling foul-mouthed bully. He is a slanderer by wholesale.

12 *Zeus.* Now for the Cyrenaic, the crowned and purple-robed.

*Her.* Attend please, gentlemen all. A most valuable article, this, and calls for a long purse. Look at him. A sweet thing in creeds. A creed for a king. Has any gentleman a use for the Lap of Luxury? Who bids?

*Third D.* Come and tell me what you know. If you are a practical creed, I will have you.

*Her.* Please not to worry him with questions, sir. He is drunk, and cannot answer; his tongue plays him tricks, as you see.

*Third D.* And who in his senses would buy such an abandoned reprobate? How he smells of scent! And how he slips and staggers about! Well, you must speak for him, Hermes. What can he do? What is his line?

*Her.* Well, for any gentleman who is not strait-laced, who loves a pretty girl, a bottle, and a jolly companion, he is the very thing. He is also a past master in gastronomy, and a connoisseur in voluptuousness generally. He was educated at Athens, and has served royalty in Sicily [1], where he had a very good character. Here are his principles in a nutshell: Think the worst of things: make the most of things: get all possible pleasure out of things.

*Third D.* You must look for wealthier purchasers. My purse is not equal to such a festive creed.

*Her.* Zeus, this lot seems likely to remain on our hands.

*Zeus.* Put it aside, and up with another. Stay, take the pair 13
from Abdera and Ephesus; the creeds of Smiles and Tears. They shall make one lot.

*Her.* Come forward, you two. Lot No. 4. A superlative pair. The smartest brace of creeds on our catalogue.

*Fourth D.* Zeus! What a difference is here! One of them does nothing but laugh, and the other might be at a funeral; he is all tears.—You there! what is the joke?

*Democr.* You ask? You and your affairs are all one vast joke.

*Fourth D.* So! You laugh at us? Our business is a toy?

*Democr.* It is. There is no taking it seriously. All is vanity. Mere interchange of atoms in an infinite void.

*Fourth D.* Your vanity is infinite, if you like. Stop that laughing, you rascal.—And you, my poor fellow, what are you 14
crying for? I must see what I can make of you.

[1] See *Aristippus* in Notes.

*Heracl.* I am thinking, friend, upon human affairs; and well may I weep and lament, for the doom of all is sealed. Hence my compassion and my sorrow. For the present, I think not of it; but the future!—the future is all bitterness. Conflagration and destruction of the world. I weep to think that nothing abides. All things are whirled together in confusion. Pleasure and pain, knowledge and ignorance, great and small; up and down they go, the playthings of Time.

*Fourth D.* And what is Time?

*Heracl.* A child; and plays at draughts and blindman's-buff.

*Fourth D.* And men?

*Heracl.* Are mortal Gods.

*Fourth D.* And Gods?

*Heracl.* Immortal men.

*Fourth D.* So! Conundrums, fellow? Nuts to crack? You are a very oracle for obscurity.

*Heracl.* Your affairs do not interest me.

*Fourth D.* No one will be fool enough to bid for you at that rate.

*Heracl.* Young and old, him that bids and him that bids not, a murrain seize you all!

*Fourth D.* A sad case. He will be melancholy mad before long. Neither of these is the creed for my money.

*Her.* No one bids.

*Zeus.* Next lot.

*Her.* The Athenian there? Old Chatterbox?

*Zeus.* By all means.

*Her.* Come forward!—A good sensible creed this. Who buys Holiness?

*Fifth D.* Let me see. What are you good for?

*Soc.* I teach the art of love.

*Fifth D.* A likely bargain for me! I want a tutor for my young Adonis.

*Soc.* And could he have a better? The love I teach is of

the spirit, not of the flesh. Under my roof, be sure, a boy will come to no harm.

*Fifth D.* Very unconvincing that. A teacher of the art of love, and never meddle with anything but the spirit? Never use the opportunities your office gives you?

*Soc.* Now by Dog and Plane-tree, it is as I say! 16

*Fifth D.* Heracles! What strange Gods are these?

*Soc.* Why, the Dog is a God, I suppose? Is not Anubis made much of in Egypt? Is there not a Dog-star in Heaven, and a Cerberus in the lower world?

*Fifth D.* Quite so. My mistake. Now what is your manner 17 of life?

*Soc.* I live in a city of my own building; I make my own laws, and have a novel constitution of my own.

*Fifth D.* I should like to hear some of your statutes.

*Soc.* You shall hear the greatest of them all. No woman shall be restricted to one husband. Every man who likes is her husband.

*Fifth D.* What! Then the laws of adultery are clean swept away?

*Soc.* I should think they were! and a world of hair-splitting with them.

*Fifth D.* And what do you do with the handsome boys?

*Soc.* Their kisses are the reward of merit, of noble and spirited actions.

*Fifth D.* Unparalleled generosity!—And now, what are the 18 main features of your philosophy?

*Soc.* Ideas and types of things. All things that you see, the earth and all that is upon it, the sea, the sky,—each has its counterpart in the invisible world.

*Fifth D.* And where are they?

*Soc.* Nowhere. Were they anywhere, they were not what they are.

*Fifth D.* I see no signs of these 'types' of yours.

*Soc.* Of course not; because you are spiritually blind. *I* see the counterparts of all things; an invisible you, an invisible me; everything is in duplicate.

*Fifth D.* Come, such a shrewd and lynx-eyed creed is worth a bid. Let me see. What do you want for him?

*Her.* Five hundred.

*Fifth D.* Done with you. Only I must settle the bill another day.

19 *Her.* What name?

*Fifth D.* Dion; of Syracuse.

*Her.* Take him, and much good may he do you. Now I want Epicureanism. Who offers for Epicureanism? He is a disciple of the laughing creed and the drunken creed, whom we were offering just now. But he has one extra accomplishment—impiety. For the rest, a dainty, lickerish creed.

*Sixth D.* What price?

*Her.* Eight pounds.

*Sixth D.* Here you are. By the way, you might let me know what he likes to eat.

*Her.* Anything sweet. Anything with honey in it. Dried figs are his favourite dish.

*Sixth D.* That is all right. We will get in a supply of Carian fig-cakes.

20 *Zeus.* Call the next lot. Stoicism; the creed of the sorrowful countenance, the close-cropped creed.

*Her.* Ah yes, several customers, I fancy, are on the look-out for him. Virtue incarnate! The very quintessence of creeds! Who is for universal monopoly?

*Seventh D.* How are we to understand that?

*Her.* Why, here is monopoly of wisdom, monopoly of beauty, monopoly of courage, monopoly of justice. Sole king, sole orator, sole legislator, sole millionaire.

*Seventh D.* And I suppose sole cook, sole tanner, sole carpenter, and all that ?

*Her.* Presumably.

*Seventh D.* Regard me as your purchaser, good fellow, and 21
tell me all about yourself. I dare say you think it rather hard to be sold for a slave ?

*Chrys.* Not at all. These things are beyond our control. And what is beyond our control is indifferent.

*Seventh D.* I don't see how you make that out.

*Chrys.* What ! Have you yet to learn that of *indifferentia* some are *praeposita* and others *rejecta* ?

*Seventh D.* Still I don't quite see.

*Chrys.* No ; how should you ? You are not familiar with our terms. You lack the *comprehensio visi.* The earnest student of logic knows this and more than this. He understands the nature of subject, predicate, and contingent, and the distinctions between them.

*Seventh D.* Now in Wisdom's name, tell me, pray, what is a predicate ? what is a contingent ? There is a ring about those words that takes my fancy.

*Chrys.* With all my heart. A man lame in one foot knocks that foot accidentally against a stone, and gets a cut. Now the man is *subject* to lameness ; which is the *predicate.* And the cut is a *contingency.*

*Seventh D.* Oh, subtle ! What else can you tell me ? 22

*Chrys.* I have verbal involutions, for the better hampering, crippling, and muzzling of my antagonists. This is performed by the use of the far-famed syllogism.

*Seventh D.* Syllogism ! I warrant him a tough customer.

*Chrys.* Take a case. You have a child ?

*Seventh D.* Well, and what if I have ?

*Chrys.* A crocodile catches him as he wanders along the bank of a river, and promises to restore him to you, if you will first

guess correctly whether he means to restore him or not. Which are you going to say ?

*Seventh D.* A difficult question. I don't know which way I should get him back soonest. In Heaven's name, answer for me, and save the child before he is eaten up.

*Chrys.* Ha, ha. I will teach you far other things than that.

*Seventh D.* For instance ?

*Chrys.* There is the 'Reaper.' There is the 'Rightful Owner.' Better still, there is the 'Electra' and the 'Man in the Hood.'

*Seventh D.* Who was he ? and who was Electra ?

*Chrys.* She was *the* Electra, the daughter of Agamemnon, to whom the same thing was known and unknown at the same time. She knew that Orestes was her brother: yet when he stood before her she did not know (until he revealed himself) that her brother was Orestes. As to the Man in the Hood, he will surprise you considerably. Answer me now: do you know your own father ?

*Seventh D.* Yes.

*Chrys.* Well now, if I present to you a man in a hood, shall you know him ? eh ?

*Seventh D.* Of course not.

23 *Chrys.* Well, but the Man in the Hood is your father. You don't know the Man in the Hood. Therefore you don't know your own father.

*Seventh D.* Why, no. But if I take his hood off, I shall get at the facts. Now tell me, what is the end of your philosophy ? What happens when you reach the goal of virtue ?

*Chrys.* In regard to things external, health, wealth, and the like, I am then all that Nature intended me to be. But there is much previous toil to be undergone. You will first sharpen your eyes on minute manuscripts, amass commentaries, and get your bellyful of outlandish terms. Last but not least, it is forbidden to be wise without repeated doses of hellebore.

*Seventh D.* All this is exalted and magnanimous to a degree. But what am I to think when I find that you are also the creed of cent-per-cent, the creed of the usurer? Has *he* swallowed his hellebore? is *he* made perfect in virtue?

*Chrys.* Assuredly. On none but the wise man does usury sit well. Consider. His is the art of putting two and two together, and usury is the art of putting interest together. The two are evidently connected, and one as much as the other is the prerogative of the true believer; who, not content, like common men, with simple interest, will also take interest *upon* interest. For interest, as you are probably aware, is of two kinds. There is simple interest, and there is its offspring, compound interest. Hear Syllogism on the subject. 'If I take simple interest, I shall also take compound. But I *shall* take simple interest: therefore I shall take compound.'

*Seventh D.* And the same applies to the fees you take from 24
your youthful pupils? None but the true believer sells virtue for a fee?

*Chrys.* Quite right. I take the fee in my pupil's interest, not because I want it. The world is made up of diffusion and accumulation. I accordingly practise my pupil in the former, and myself in the latter.

*Seventh D.* But it ought to be the other way. The pupil ought to accumulate, and you, 'sole millionaire,' ought to diffuse.

*Chrys.* Ha! you jest with me? Beware of the shaft of insoluble syllogism.

*Seventh D.* What harm can that do?

*Chrys.* It cripples; it ties the tongue, and turns the brain. 25
Nay, I have but to will it, and you are stone this instant.

*Seventh D.* Stone! You are no Perseus, friend?

*Chrys.* See here. A stone is a body?

*Seventh D.* Yes.

*Chrys.* Well, and an animal is a body?

*Seventh D.* Yes.

*Chrys.* And you are an animal ?

*Seventh D.* I suppose I am.

*Chrys.* Therefore you are a body. Therefore a stone.

*Seventh D.* Mercy, in Heaven's name ! Unstone me, and let me be flesh as heretofore.

*Chrys.* That is soon done. Back with you into flesh ! Thus: Is every body animate ?

*Seventh D.* No.

*Chrys.* Is a stone animate ?

*Seventh D.* No.

*Chrys.* Now, you are a body ?

*Seventh D.* Yes.

*Chrys.* And an animate body ?

*Seventh D.* Yes.

*Chrys.* Then being animate, you cannot be a stone.

*Seventh D.* Ah ! thank you, thank you. I was beginning to feel my limbs growing numb and solidifying like Niobe's. Oh, I must have you. What's to pay ?

*Her.* Fifty pounds.

*Seventh D.* Here it is.

*Her.* Are you sole purchaser ?

*Seventh D.* Not I. All these gentlemen here are going shares.

*Her.* A fine strapping lot of fellows, and will do the 'Reaper' credit.

26 *Zeus.* Don't waste time. Next lot,—the Peripatetic !

*Her.* Now, my beauty, now, Affluence ! Gentlemen, if you want Wisdom for your money, here is a creed that comprises all knowledge.

*Eighth D.* What is he like ?

*Her.* He is temperate, good-natured, easy to get on with ; and his strong point is, that he is twins.

*Eighth D.* How can that be ?

*Her.* Why, he is one creed outside, and another inside. So remember, if you buy him, one of him is called Esoteric, and the other Exoteric.

*Eighth D.* And what has he to say for himself ?

*Her.* He has to say that there are three kinds of good: spiritual, corporeal, circumstantial.

*Eighth D.* *There*'s something a man can understand. How much is he ?

*Her.* Eighty pounds.

*Eighth D.* Eighty pounds is a long price.

*Her.* Not at all, my dear sir, not at all. You see, there is some money with him, to all appearance. Snap him up before it is too late. Why, from him you will find out in no time how long a gnat lives, to how many fathoms' depth the sunlight penetrates the sea, and what an oyster's soul is like.

*Eighth D.* Heracles ! Nothing escapes him.

*Her.* Ah, these are trifles. You should hear some of his more abstruse speculations, concerning generation and birth and the development of the embryo ; and his distinction between man, the laughing creature, and the ass, which is neither a laughing nor a carpentering nor a shipping creature.

*Eighth D.* Such knowledge is as useful as it is ornamental. Eighty pounds be it, then.

*Her.* He is yours. 27

*Zeus.* What have we left ?

*Her.* There is Scepticism. Come along, Pyrrhias, and be put up. Quick's the word. The attendance is dwindling; there will be small competition. Well, who buys Lot 9 ?

*Ninth D.* I. Tell me first, though, what do you know ?

*Sc.* Nothing.

*Ninth D.* But how's that?

*Sc.* There does not appear to me to *be* anything.

*Ninth D.* Are not *we* something ?

*Sc.* How do I know that ?

*Ninth D.* And you yourself ?

*Sc.* Of that I am still more doubtful.

*Ninth D.* Well, you *are* in a fix ! And what have you got those scales for ?

*Sc.* I use them to weigh arguments in, and get them evenly balanced. They must be absolutely equal—not a feather-weight to choose between them ; then, and not till then, can I make uncertain which is right.

*Ninth D.* What else can you turn your hand to ?

*Sc.* Anything ; except catching a runaway.

*Ninth D.* And why not that ?

*Sc.* Because, friend, everything eludes my grasp.

*Ninth D.* I believe you. A slow, lumpish fellow you seem to be. And what is the end of your knowledge ?

*Sc.* Ignorance. Deafness. Blindness.

*Ninth D.* What ! sight and hearing both gone ?

*Sc.* And with them judgement and perception, and all, in short, that distinguishes man from a worm.

*Ninth D.* You are worth money !—What shall we say for him ?

*Her.* Four pounds.

*Ninth D.* Here it is. Well, fellow ; so you are mine ?

*Sc.* I doubt it.

*Ninth D.* Nay, doubt it not ! You are bought and paid for.

*Sc.* It is a difficult case. . . . I reserve my decision.

*Ninth D.* Now, come along with me, like a good slave.

*Sc.* But how am I to know whether what you say is true ?

*Ninth D.* Ask the auctioneer. Ask my money. Ask the spectators.

*Sc.* Spectators ? But can we be sure there are any ?

*Ninth D.* Oh, I'll send you to the treadmill. That will convince you with a vengeance that I am your master.

*Sc.* Reserve your decision.

*Ninth D.* Too late. It is given.

*Her.* Stop that wrangling and go with your purchaser. Gentlemen, we hope to see you here again to-morrow, when we shall be offering some lots suitable for plain men, artisans, and shopkeepers. F.

# THE FISHER

## A RESURRECTION PIECE

*Lucian or Parrhesiades. Socrates. Empedocles. Plato. Chrysippus. Diogenes. Aristotle. Other Philosophers. Platonists. Pythagoreans. Stoics. Peripatetics. Epicureans. Academics. Philosophy. Truth. Temperance. Virtue. Syllogism. Exposure. Priestess of Athene.*

*Soc.* Stone the miscreant; stone him with many stones; clod him with clods; pot him with pots; let the culprit feel your sticks; leave him no way out. At him, Plato! come, Chrysippus, let him have it! Shoulder to shoulder, close the ranks;

Let wallet succour wallet, staff aid staff!

We are all parties in this war; not one of us but he has assailed. You, Diogenes, now if ever is the time for that stick of yours; stand firm, all of you. Let him reap the fruits of his revilings. What, Epicurus, Aristippus, tired already? 'tis too soon; ye sages,

Be men; relume that erstwhile furious wrath!

Aristotle, one more sprint. There! the brute is caught; we 2
have you, villain. You shall soon know a little more about the

characters you have assailed. Now, what shall we do with him? it must be rather an elaborate execution, to meet all our claims upon him; he owes a separate death to every one of us.

*First Phil.* Impale him, say I.

*Second Phil.* Yes, but scourge him first.

*Third Phil.* Tear out his eyes.

*Fourth Phil.* Ah, but first out with the offending tongue.

*Soc.* What say you, Empedocles?

*Emp.* Oh, fling him into a crater; that will teach him to vilify his betters.

*Pl.* 'Twere best for him, Orpheus or Pentheus like, to

Find death, dashed all to pieces on the rock;

so each might have taken a piece home with him.

3 *Lu.* Forbear; spare me; I appeal to the God of suppliants.

*Soc.* Too late; no loophole is left you now. And you know your Homer:

'Twixt men and lions, covenants are null.'

*Lu.* Why, it is in Homer's name that I ask my boon. You will perhaps pay reverence to his lines, and listen to a selection from him:

Slay not; no churl is he; a ransom take
Of bronze and gold, whereof wise hearts are fain.

*Pl.* Why, two can play at that game; *exempli gratia*,

Reviler, babble not of gold, nor nurse
Hope of escape from these our hands that hold thee.

*Lu.* Ah me, ah me! my best hopes dashed, with Homer! Let me fly to Euripides; it may be he will protect me:

Leave him his life; the suppliant's life is sacred.

*Pl.* Does this happen to be Euripides too—

Evil men evil treated is no evil?

*Lu.* And will you slay me now for nought but words ?

*Pl.* Most certainly ; our author has something on that point too :

Unbridled lips
And folly's slips
Invite Fate's whips.

*Lu.* Oh, very well ; as you are all set on murdering me, and escape is impossible, do at least tell me who you are, and what harm I have done you ; it must be something irreparable, to judge by your relentless murderous pursuit.

*Pl.* What harm you have done us, vile fellow ? your own conscience and your fine dialogues will tell you ; you have called Philosophy herself bad names, and as for us, you have subjected us to the indignity of a public auction, and put up wise men—ay, and free men, which is more—for sale. We have reason to be angry ; we have got a short leave of absence from Hades, and come up against you—Chrysippus here, Epicurus and myself, Aristotle yonder, the taciturn Pythagoras, Diogenes and all of us that your dialogues have made so free with.

*Lu.* Ah, I breathe again. Once hear the truth about my conduct to you, and you will never put me to death. You can throw away those stones. Or, no, keep them ; you shall have a better mark for them presently.

*Pl.* This is trifling. This day thou diest ; nay, even now,

A suit of stones shalt don, thy livery due.

*Lu.* Believe me, good gentlemen, I have been at much pains on your behalf ; to slay me is to slay one who should rather be selected for commendation ; a kindred spirit, a well-wisher, a man after your own heart, a promoter, if I may be bold to say it, of your pursuits. See to it that you catch not the tone of our latter-day philosophers, and be thankless, petulant, and hard of heart, to him that deserves better of you.

*Pl.* Talk of a brazen front ! So to abuse us is to oblige

us. I believe you are under the delusion that you are really talking to slaves; after the insolent excesses of your tongue, do you propose to chop gratitude with us?

6 *Lu.* How or when was I ever insolent to you? I have always been an admirer of philosophy, your panegyrist, and a student of the writings you left. All that comes from my pen is but what you give me; I deflower you, like a bee, for the behoof of mankind; and then there is praise and recognition; they know the flowers, whence and whose the honey was, and the manner of my gathering; their surface feeling is for my selective art, but deeper down it is for you and your meadow, where you put forth such bright blooms and myriad dyes, if one knows but how to sort and mix and match, that one be not in discord with another. Could he that had found you such have the heart to abuse those benefactors to whom his little fame was due? then he must be a Thamyris or Eurytus, defying the Muses who gave his gift of song, or challenging Apollo with the bow, forgetful from whom he had his marksmanship.

7 *Pl.* All this, good sir, is quite according to the principles of rhetoric; that is to say, it is clean contrary to the facts; your unscrupulousness is only emphasized by this adding of insult to injury; you confess that your arrows are from our quiver, and you use them against us; your one aim is to abuse us. This is our reward for showing you that meadow, letting you pluck freely, fill your bosom, and depart. For this alone you richly deserve death.

8 *Lu.* There; your ears are partial; they are deaf to the right. Why, I would never have believed that personal feeling could affect a Plato, a Chrysippus, an Aristotle; with you, of all men, I thought there was dry light. But, dear sirs, do not condemn me unheard; give me trial first. Was not the principle of your establishing—that the law of the stronger was not the law of the State, and that differences should be settled in court after due

hearing of both sides? Appoint a judge, then; be you my accusers, by your own mouths or by your chosen representative; and let me defend my own case; then if I be convicted of wrong, and that be the court's decision, I shall get my deserts, and you will have no violence upon your consciences. But if examination shows me spotless and irreproachable, the court will acquit me, and then turn you your wrath upon the deceivers who have excited you against me.

*Pl.* Ah, every cock to his own dunghill! You think you will 9
hoodwink the jury and get off. I hear you are a lawyer, an advocate, an old hand at a speech. Have you any judge to suggest who will be proof against such an experienced corrupter as you?

*Lu.* Oh, be reassured. The official I think of proposing is no suspicious, dubious character likely to sell a verdict. What say you to forming the court yourselves, with Philosophy for your President?

*Pl.* Who is to prosecute, if we are the jury?

*Lu.* Oh, you can do both; I am not in the least afraid; so much stronger is my case; the defence wins, hands down.

*Pl.* Pythagoras, Socrates, what do you think? perhaps the 10
man's appeal to law is not unreasonable.

*Soc.* No; come along, form the court, fetch Philosophy, and see what he has to say for himself. To condemn unheard is a sadly crude proceeding, not for us; leave that to the hasty people with whom might is right. We shall give occasion to the enemy to blaspheme if we stone a man without a hearing, professed lovers of justice as we are. We shall have to keep quiet about Anytus and Meletus, my accusers, and the jury on that occasion, if we cannot spare an hour to hear this fellow before he suffers.

*Pl.* Very true, Socrates. We will go and fetch Philosophy. The decision shall be hers, and we will accept it, whatever it is.

11 *Lu.* Why, now, my masters, you are in a better and more law-abiding mood. However, keep those stones, as I said; you will need them in court. But where is Philosophy to be found? I do not know where she lives, myself. I once spent a long time wandering about in search of her house, wishing to make her acquaintance. Several times I met some long-bearded people in threadbare cloaks who professed to be fresh from her presence; I took their word for it, and asked them the way; but they knew considerably less about it than I, and either declined to answer, by way of concealing their ignorance, or else pointed to one door after another. I have never been able to find the right one to this day.

12 Many a time, upon some inward prompting or external offer of guidance, I have come to a door with the confident hope that this time I really was right; there was such a crowd flowing in and out, all of solemn persons decently habited and thoughtful-faced; I would insinuate myself into the press and go in too. What I found would be a woman who was not really natural, however skilfully she played at beauty unadorned; I could see at once that the apparent *négligé* of her hair was studied for effect, and the folds of her dress not so careless as they looked. One could tell that nature was a scheme of decoration with her, and artlessness an artistic device. The white lead and the rouge did not absolutely defy detection, and her talk betrayed her real vocation; she liked her lovers to appreciate her beauty, had a ready hand for presents, made room by her side for the rich, and hardly vouchsafed her poorer lovers a distant glance. Now and then, when her dress came a little open by accident, I saw that she had on a massive gold necklace heavier than a penal collar. That was enough for me; I would retrace my steps, sincerely pitying the unfortunates whom she led by the—beard, and their Ixion-embracings of a phantom.

13 *Pl.* You are right there; the door is not conspicuous, nor

generally known. However, we need not go to her house; we will wait for her here in the Ceramicus. I should think it is near her hour for coming back from the Academy, and taking her walk in the Poecile; she is very regular; to be sure, here she comes. Do you see the orderly, rather prim lady there, with the kindly look in her eyes, and the slow meditative walk?

*Lu.* I see several answering the description so far as looks and walk and clothes go. Yet among them all the real lady Philosophy can be but one.

*Pl.* True; but as soon as she opens her lips you will know.

*Philos.* Dear me, what are Plato and Chrysippus and Aristotle 14
doing up here, and the rest of them—a living dictionary of my teachings? Alive again? how is this? have things been going wrong down there? you look angry. And who is your prisoner? a rifler of tombs? a murderer? a temple-robber?

*Pl.* Worse yet, Philosophy. He has dared to slander your most sacred self, and all of us who have been privileged to impart anything from you to posterity.

*Philos.* And did you lose your tempers over abusive words? did you forget how Comedy handled me at the Dionysia, and how I yet counted her a friend? Did I ever sue her, or go and remonstrate? or did I let her enjoy her holidays in the harmless old-fashioned way? I know very well that a jest spoils no real beauty, but rather improves it; so gold is polished by hard rubs, and shines all the brighter for it. But you seem to have grown passionate and censorious. Come, why are you strangling him like that?

*Pl.* We have got this one day's leave, and come after him to give him his deserts. Rumours had reached us of the things he used to say about us in his lectures.

*Philos.* And are you going to kill him without a trial or a 15
hearing? I can see he wishes to say something.

*Pl.* No; we decided to refer it all to you. If you will accept the task, the decision shall be yours.

*Philos.* Sir, what is your wish?

*Lu.* The same, dear Mistress; for none but you can find the truth. It cost me much entreaty to get the case reserved for you.

*Pl.* You call her Mistress now, scoundrel; the other day you were making out Philosophy the meanest of things, when before that great audience you let her several doctrines go for a pitiful threepence apiece.

*Philos.* It may be that it was not Ourself he then reviled, but some impostors who practised vile arts in our name.

*Pl.* The truth will soon come to light, if you will hear his defence.

*Philos.* Come we to the Areopagus—or better, to the Acropolis, where the panorama of Athens will be before us.

16 Ladies, will you stroll in the Poecile meanwhile? I will join you when I have given judgement.

*Lu.* Who are these, Philosophy? methinks their appearance is seemly as your own.

*Philos.* This with the masculine features is Virtue; then there is Temperance, and Justice by her side. In front is Culture; and this shadowy creature with the indefinite complexion is Truth.

*Lu.* I do not see which you mean.

*Philos.* Not see her? over there, all naked and unadorned, shrinking from observation, and always slipping out of sight.

*Lu.* Now I just discern her. But why not bring them all with you? there would be a fullness and completeness about that commission. Ah yes, and I should like to brief Truth on my behalf.

*Philos.* Well thought of; come, all of you; you will not mind sitting through a single case—in which we have a personal interest, too?

*Truth.* Go on, the rest of you; it is superfluous for me to 17
hear what I know all about before.

*Philos.* But, Truth dear, your presence will be useful to us; you will show us what to think.

*Truth.* May I bring my two favourite maids, then?

*Philos.* And as many more as you like.

*Truth.* Come with me, Freedom and Frankness; this poor little adorer of ours is in trouble without any real reason; we shall be able to get him out of it. Exposure, my man, we shall not want you.

*Lu.* Ah yes, Mistress, let us have him, of all others; my opponents are no ordinary ruffians; they are people who make a fine show and are hard to expose; they have always some back way out of a difficulty; we must have Exposure.

*Philos.* Yes, we must, indeed; and you had better bring Demonstration too.

*Truth.* Come all of you, as you are such important legal persons.

*Ar.* What is this? Philosophy, he is employing Truth 18
against us!

*Philos.* And are Plato and Chrysippus and Aristotle afraid of her lying on his behalf, being who she is?

*Pl.* Oh, well, no; only he is a sad plausible rogue; he will take her in.

*Philos.* Never fear; no wrong will be done, with madam Justice on the bench by us. Let us go up.

Prisoner, your name? 19

*Lu.* Parrhesiades, son of Alethion, son of Elenxicles[1].

*Philos.* And your country?

*Lu.* I am a Syrian from the Euphrates, my lady. But is the question relevant? Some of my accusers I know to be as much barbarians by blood as myself; but character and culture do

[1] i.e Free-speaker, son of Truthful, son of Exposure.

not vary as a man comes from Soli or Cyprus, Babylon or Stagira. However, even one who could not talk Greek would be none the worse in your eyes, so long as his sentiments were right and just.

*Philos.* True, the question was unnecessary.

But what is your profession ? that at least is essential.

20 *Lu.* I profess hatred of pretension and imposture, lying, and pride; the whole loathsome tribe of them I hate; and you know how numerous they are.

*Philos.* Upon my word, you must have your hands full at this profession !

*Lu.* I have; you see what general dislike and danger it brings upon me. However, I do not neglect the complementary branch, in which love takes the place of hate; it includes love of truth and beauty and simplicity and all that is akin to love. But the subjects for this branch of the profession are sadly few; those of the other, for whom hatred is the right treatment, are reckoned by the thousand. Indeed there is some danger of the one feeling being atrophied, while the other is over-developed.

*Philos.* That should not be; they run in couples, you know. Do not separate your two branches; they should have unity in diversity.

*Lu.* You know better than I, Philosophy. My way is just to hate a villain, and love and praise the good.

21 *Philos.* Well, well. Here we are at the appointed place. We will hold the trial in the forecourt of Athene Polias. Priestess, arrange our seats, while we salute the Goddess.

*Lu.* Polias, come to my aid against these pretenders, mindful of the daily perjuries thou hearest from them. Their deeds too are revealed to thee alone, in virtue of thy charge. Thou hast now thine hour of vengeance. If thou see me in evil case, if blacks be more than whites, then cast thou thy vote and save me !

*Philos.* So. Now we are seated, ready to hear your words. 22
Choose one of your number, the best accuser you may, make your charge, and bring your proofs. Were all to speak, there would be no end. And you, Parrhesiades, shall afterwards make your defence.

*Ch.* Plato, none of us will conduct the prosecution better than you. Your thoughts are heaven-high, your style the perfect Attic; grace and persuasion, insight and subtlety, the cogency of well-ordered proof—all these are gathered in you. Take the spokesman's office and say what is fitting on our behalf. Call to memory and roll in one all that ever you said against Gorgias, Polus, Hippias, Prodicus; you have now to do with a worse than them. Let him taste your irony; ply him with your keen incessant questions; and if you will, perorate with the mighty Zeus charioting his winged car through Heaven, and grudging if this fellow get not his deserts.

*Pl.* Nay, nay; choose one of more strenuous temper— 23
Diogenes, Antisthenes, Crates, or yourself, Chrysippus. It is no time now for beauty or literary skill; controversial and forensic resource is what we want. This Parrhesiades is an orator.

*Diog.* Let me be accuser; no need for long speeches here. Moreover, I was the worst treated of all; threepence was my price the other day.

*Pl.* Philosophy, Diogenes will speak for us. But mind, friend, you are not to represent yourself alone, but think of us all. If we have any private differences of doctrine, do not go into that; never mind now which of us is right, but keep your indignation for Philosophy's wrongs and the names he has called her. Leave alone the principles we differ about, and maintain what is common to us all. Now mark, you stand for us all; on you our whole fame depends; shall it come out majestic, or in the semblance he has given it?

*Diog.* Never fear; nothing shall be omitted; I speak for all. 24

Philosophy may be softened by his words—she was ever gentle and forgiving—*she* may be minded to acquit him ; but the fault shall not be mine; I will show him that our staves are more than ornaments.

*Philos.* Nay, take not that way ; words, not bludgeons ; 'tis better so. But no delay now ; your time-allowance has begun ; and the court is all attention.

*Lu.* Philosophy, let the rest take their seats and vote with you, leaving Diogenes as sole accuser.

*Philos.* Have you no fears of their condemning you ?

*Lu.* None whatever ; I wish to increase my majority, that is all.

*Philos.* I commend your spirit. Gentlemen, take your seats. Now, Diogenes.

25 *Diog.* With our lives on earth, Philosophy, you are acquainted ; I need not dwell long upon them. Of myself I say nothing ; but Pythagoras, Plato, Aristotle, Chrysippus, and the rest—who knows not the benefits that they conferred on mankind ? I will come at once, then, to the insults to which we have been subjected by the thrice accursed Parrhesiades. He was, by his own account, an advocate ; but he has left the courts and the fame there to be won, and has availed himself of all the verbal skill and proficiency so acquired for a campaign of abuse against us. We are impostors and deceivers ; his audiences must ridicule and scorn us for nobodies. Did I say ' nobodies ' ? he has made us an abomination, rather, in the eyes of the vulgar, and yourself with us, Philosophy. Your teachings are balderdash and rubbish ; the noblest of your precepts to us he parodies, winning for himself applause and approval, and for us humiliation. For so it is with the great public ; it loves a master of flouts and jeers, and loves him in proportion to the grandeur of what he assails ; you know how it delighted long ago in Aristophanes and Eupolis, when they caricatured our Socrates on

the stage, and wove farcical comedies around him. But they at least confined themselves to a single victim, and they had the charter of Dionysus; a jest might pass at holiday time, and the laughing God might be well pleased.

But this fellow gets together an upper-class audience, gives 26
long thought to his preparations, writes down his slanders in a thick notebook, and uplifts his voice in vituperation of Plato, Pythagoras, Aristotle, Chrysippus, and in short all of us; *he* cannot plead holiday time, nor yet any private grievance; he might perhaps be forgiven if he had done it in self-defence; but it was he that opened hostilities. Worst of all, Philosophy, he shelters himself under your name, entices Dialogue from our company to be his ally and mouthpiece, and induces our good comrade Menippus to collaborate constantly with him; Menippus, more by token, is the one deserter and absentee on this occasion.

Does he not then abundantly deserve his fate? What con- 27
ceivable defence is open to him, after his public defamation of all that is noblest? On the public which listened to him, too, the spectacle of his condign punishment will have a healthy effect; we shall see no more ridicule of Philosophy. Tame submission to insult would naturally enough be taken, not for moderation, but for insensibility and want of spirit. Who could be expected to put up with his last performance? He brought us to market like a gang of slaves, and handed us over to the auctioneer. Some, I believe, fetched high prices; but others went for four or five pounds, and as for me—confound his impudence, threepence! And fine fun the audience had out of it! We did well to be angry; we have come from Hades; and we ask you to give us satisfaction for this abominable outrage.

*Resurgents.* Hear, hear! well spoken, Diogenes; well and 28
loyally.

*Philos.* Silence in court! Time the defence. Parrhesiades, it is now your turn; they are timing you; so proceed.

29 *Par.* Philosophy, Diogenes has been far indeed from exhausting his material; the greater part of it, and the more strongly expressed, he has passed by, for reasons best known to himself. I refer to statements of mine which I am as far from denying that I made as from having provided myself with any elaborate defence of them. Any of these that have been omitted by him, and not previously emphasized by myself, I propose now to quote; this will be the best way to show you who were the persons that I sold by auction and inveighed against as pretenders and impostors; please to concentrate your vigilance on the truth or falsehood of my descriptions. If what I say is injurious or severe, your censure will be more fairly directed at the perpetrators than at the discoverer of such iniquities. I had no sooner realized the odious practices which his profession imposes on an advocate—the deceit, falsehood, bluster, clamour, pushing, and all the long hateful list, than I fled as a matter of course from these, betook myself to your dear service, Philosophy, and pleased myself with the thought of a remainder of life spent far from the tossing waves in a calm haven beneath your shadow.

30 At my first peep into your realm, how could I but admire yourself and all these your disciples? there they were, legislating for the perfect life, holding out hands of help to those that would reach it, commending all that was fairest and best; fairest and best—but a man must keep straight on for it and never slip, must set his eyes unwaveringly on the laws that you have laid down, must tune and test his life thereby; and that, Zeus be my witness, there are few enough in these days of ours to do.

31 So I saw how many were in love, not with Philosophy, but with the credit it brings; in the vulgar externals, so easy for any one to ape, they showed a striking resemblance to the real article, perfect in beard and walk and attire; but in life and

conduct they belied their looks, read your lessons backwards, and degraded their profession. Then I was wroth; methought it was as though some soft womanish actor on the tragic stage should give us Achilles or Theseus or Heracles himself; he cannot stride nor speak out as a Hero should, but minces along under his enormous mask; Helen or Polyxena would find him too realistically feminine to pass for them; and what shall an invincible Heracles say? Will he not swiftly pound man and mask together into nothingness with his club, for womanizing and disgracing him?

Well, these people were about as fit to represent you, and the 32
degradation of it all was too much for me. Apes daring to masquerade as heroes! emulators of the ass at Cyme! The Cymeans, you know, had never seen ass or lion; so the ass came the lion over them, with the aid of a borrowed skin and his most awe-inspiring bray; however, a stranger who had often seen both brought the truth to light with a stick. But what most distressed me, Philosophy, was this: when one of these people was detected in rascality, impropriety, or immorality, every one put it down to philosophy, and to the particular philosopher whose name the delinquent took in vain without ever acting on his principles; the living rascal disgraced you, the long dead; for you were not there in the flesh to point the contrast; so, as it was clear enough that *his* life was vile and disgusting, your case was given away by association with his, and you had to share his disgrace.

This spectacle, I say, was too much for me; I began exposing 33
them, and distinguishing between them and you; and for this good work you now arraign me. So then, if I find one of the Initiated betraying and parodying the Mysteries of the two Goddesses, and if I protest and denounce him, the transgression will be mine? There is something wrong there; why, at the Games, if an actor who has to present Athene or Posidon or

Zeus plays his part badly, derogating from the divine dignity, the stewards have him whipped; well, the Gods are not angry with them for having the officers whip the man who wears their mask and their attire; I imagine they approve of the punishment. To play a slave or a messenger badly is a trifling offence, but to represent Zeus or Heracles to the spectators in an unworthy manner—that is a crime and a sacrilege.

34 I can indeed conceive nothing more extraordinary than that so many of them should get themselves absolutely perfect in your words, and then live precisely as if the sole object of reading and studying them had been to reverse them in practice. All their professions of despising wealth and appearances, of admiring nothing but what is noble, of superiority to passion, of being proof against splendour, and associating with its owners only on equal terms—how fair and wise and laudable they all are! But they take pay for imparting them, they are abashed in presence of the rich, their lips water at sight of coin; they are dogs for temper, hares for cowardice, apes for imitativeness, asses for lust, cats for thievery, cocks for jealousy. They are a perfect laughing-stock with their strivings after vile ends, their jostling of each other at rich men's doors, their attendance at crowded dinners, and their vulgar obsequiousness at table. They swill more than they should and would like to swill more than they do, they spoil the wine with unwelcome and untimely disquisitions, and they cannot carry their liquor. The ordinary people who are present naturally flout them, and are revolted by the philosophy which breeds such brutes.

35 What is so monstrous is that every man of them says he has no needs, proclaims aloud that wisdom is the only wealth, and directly afterwards comes begging and makes a fuss if he is refused; it would hardly be stranger to see one in kingly attire, with tall tiara, crown, and all the attributes of royalty, asking his inferiors for a little something more. When they want to

get something, we hear a great deal, to be sure, about community of goods—how wealth is a thing indifferent—and what is gold and silver ?—neither more nor less worth than pebbles on the beach. But when an old comrade and tried friend needs help and comes to them with his modest requirements, ah, then there is silence and searchings of heart, unlearning of tenets and flat renunciation of doctrines. All their fine talk of friendship, with Virtue and The Good, have vanished and flown, who knows whither ? they were winged words in sad truth, empty phantoms, only meant for daily conversational use.

These men are excellent friends so long as there is no gold 36
or silver for them to dispute the possession of ; exhibit but a copper or two, and peace is broken, truce void, armistice ended ; their books are blank, their Virtue fled, and they so many dogs ; some one has flung a bone into the pack, and up they spring to bite each other and snarl at the one which has pounced successfully. There is a story of an Egyptian king who taught some apes the sword-dance ; the imitative creatures very soon picked it up, and used to perform in purple robes and masks ; for some time the show was a great success, till at last an ingenious spectator brought some nuts in with him and threw them down. The apes forgot their dancing at the sight, dropped their humanity, resumed their apehood, and, smashing masks and tearing dresses, had a free fight for the provender. Alas for the *corps de ballet* and the gravity of the audience !

These people are just those apes ; it is they that I reviled ; 37
and I shall never cease exposing and ridiculing them ; but about you and your like—for there *are*, in spite of all, some true lovers of philosophy and keepers of your laws—about you or them may I never be mad enough to utter an injurious or rude word ! Why, what could I find to say ? what is there in your lives that lends itself to such treatment ? but those pretenders deserve my detestation, as they have that of heaven. Why, tell me, all

of you, what have such creatures to do with you? Is there a trace in their lives of kindred and affinity? Does oil mix with water? If they grow their beards and call themselves philosophers and look solemn, do these things make them like you? I could have contained myself if there had been any touch of plausibility in their acting; but the vulture is more like the nightingale than they like philosophers. And now I have pleaded my cause to the best of my ability. Truth, I rely upon you to confirm my words.

38 *Philos.* Parrhesiades, retire to a further distance. Well, and our verdict? How think you the man has spoken?

*Truth.* Ah, Philosophy, while he was speaking I was ready to sink through the ground; it was all so true. As I listened, I could identify every offender, and I was fitting caps all the time—this is so-and-so, that is the other man, all over. I tell you they were all as plain as in a picture—speaking likenesses not of their bodies only, but of their very souls.

*Tem.* Yes, Truth, I could not help blushing at it.

*Philos.* What say you, gentlemen?

*Res.* Why, of course, that he is acquitted of the charge, and stands recorded as our friend and benefactor. Our case is just that of the Trojans, who entertained the tragic actor only to find him reciting their own calamities. Well, recite away, our tragedian, with these pests of ours for dramatis personae.

*Diog.* I too, Philosophy, give him my meed of praise; I withdraw my charges, and count him a worthy friend.

39 *Philos.* I congratulate you, Parrhesiades; you are unanimously acquitted, and are henceforth one of us.

*Par.* Your humble servant. Or no, I must find more tragic words to fit the solemnity of the occasion:

> Victorious might
> My life's path light,
> And ever strew with garlands bright!

*Vir.* Well, now we come to our second course; let us have in the other people and try them for their insults. Parrhesiades shall accuse them each in turn.

*Par.* Well said, Virtue. Syllogism, my boy, put your head out over the city and summon the philosophers.

*Syl.* Oyez, oyez! All philosophers to the Acropolis to make 40
their defence before Virtue, Philosophy, and Justice.

*Par.* The proclamation does not bring them in flocks, does it? They have their reasons for keeping clear of Justice. And a good many of them are too busy with their rich friends. If you want them all to come, Syllogism, I will tell you what to say.

*Philos.* No, no; call them yourself, Parrhesiades, in your own way.

*Par.* Quite a simple matter. Oyez, oyez! All who profess 41
philosophy and hold themselves entitled to the name of philosopher shall appear on the Acropolis for largesse; £8, with a sesame cake, to each. A long beard shall qualify for a square of compressed figs, in addition. Every applicant to have with him, of temperance, justice, and self-control, any that he is in possession of, it being clearly understood that these are not indispensable, and, of syllogisms, a complete set of five, these being the condition precedent of wisdom.

> Two golden talents in the midst are set,
> His prize who wrangles best amongst his peers.

Just look! the ascent packed with a pushing crowd, at the 42
very first sound of my £8. More of them along the Pelasgicum, more by the temple of Asclepius, a bigger crowd still over the Areopagus. Why, positively there are a few at the tomb of Talos; and see those putting ladders against the temple of Castor and Pollux; up they climb, buzzing and clustering like

a swarm of bees. In Homeric phrase, on this side are exceeding many, and on that

Ten thousand, thick as leaves and flowers in spring.

Noisily they settle, the Acropolis is covered with them in a trice; everywhere wallet and beard, flattery and effrontery, staves and greed, logic and avarice. The little company which came up at the first proclamation is swamped beyond recovery, swallowed up in these later crowds; it is hopeless to find them, because of the external resemblance. That is the worst of it, Philosophy; you are really open to censure for not marking and labelling them; these impostors are often more convincing than the true philosophers.

*Philos.* It shall be done before long; at present let us receive them.

43 *Platon.* Platonists first!

*Pyth.* No, no; Pythagoreans first; our master is senior.

*Stoics.* Rubbish! the Porch is the best.

*Peri.* Now, now, this is a question of money; Peripatetics first there!

*Epic.* Hand over those cakes and fig-squares; as to the money, Epicureans will not mind waiting till the last.

*Acad.* Where are the two talents? none can touch the Academy at a wrangle; we will soon show you that.

*Stoics.* Not if we know it.

44 *Philos.* Cease your strife. Cynics there, no more pushing! and keep those sticks quiet. You have mistaken the nature of this summons. We three, Philosophy, Virtue, and Truth, are about to decide which are the true philosophers; that done, those whose lives are found to be in accord with our pleasure will be made happy by our award; but the impostors who are not truly of our kin we shall crush as they deserve, that they may no more make vain claims to what is too high for them.

Ha! you fly? In good truth they do, jumping down the crags, most of them. Why, the Acropolis is deserted, except for—yes, a few have stood their ground and are not afraid of the judgement.

Attendants, pick up the wallet which yonder flying Cynic 45
has dropped. Let us see what it contains—beans? a book? some coarse crust?

*Par.* Oh dear no. Here is gold; some scent; a mirror; dice.

*Philos.* Ah, good honest man! such were his little necessaries for the philosophic life, such his title to indulge in general abuse and instruct his neighbours.

*Par.* There you have them. The problem before you is, how the general ignorance is to be dispersed, and other people enabled to discriminate between the genuine and the other sort. Find the solution, Truth; for indeed it concerns you; Falsehood must not prevail; shall Ignorance shield the base while they counterfeit the good, and you never know it?

*Truth.* I think we had better give Parrhesiades this commis- 46
sion; he has been shown an honest man, our friend and your true admirer, Philosophy. Let him take Exposure with him and have interviews with all who profess philosophy; any genuine scion that he finds let him crown with olive and entertain in the Banqueting Hall; and for the rascals—ah, how many!—who are only costume philosophers, let him pull their cloaks off them, clip their beards short with a pair of common goat-shears, and mark their foreheads or brand them between the eyebrows; the design on the branding iron to be a fox or an ape.

*Philos.* Well planned, Truth. And, Parrhesiades, here is a test for you; you know how young eagles are supposed to be tested by the sun; well, our candidates have not got to satisfy us that they can look at light, of course; but put gold, fame, and pleasure before their eyes; when you see one remain un-

conscious and unattracted, there is your man for the olive; but when one looks hard that way, with a motion of his hand in the direction of the gold, first off with his beard, and then off with him to the brander.

47 *Par.* I will follow your instructions, Philosophy; you will soon find a large majority ornamented with fox or ape, and very few with olive. If you like, though, I will get some of them up here for you to see.

*Philos.* What do you mean? bring them back after that stampede?

*Par.* Oh yes, if the priestess will lend me the line I see there and the Piraean fisherman's votive hook; I will not keep them long.

*Priestess.* You can have them; and the rod to complete the equipment.

*Par.* Thanks; now quickly, please, a few dried figs and a handful of gold.

*Priestess.* There.

*Philos.* What *is* all this about?

*Priestess.* He has baited his hook with the figs and gold, and is sitting on the parapet dangling it over the city.

*Philos.* What *are* you doing, Parrhesiades? do you think you are going to fish up stones from the Pelasgicum?

*Par.* Hush! wait till I get a bite. Posidon, the fisherman's friend, and you, dear Amphitrite, send me good fishing!

48 Ah, a fine bass; no, it is not; it is a gilthead.

*Expo.* A shark, you mean; there, see, he is getting near the hook, open-mouthed too. He scents the gold; now he is close—touching—he has it; up with him!

*Par.* Give me a hand with the line, Exposure; here he is. Now, my best of fishes, what do we make of you? *Salmo Cynicus*, that is what *you* are. Good gracious, what teeth! Aha, my brave fish, caught snapping up trifles in the rocks,

where you thought you could lurk unobserved? But now you shall hang by the gills for every one to look at you. Pull out hook and bait. Why, the hook is bare; he has not been long assimilating the figs, eh? and the gold has gone down too.

*Diog.* Make him disgorge; we want the bait for some more.

*Par.* There, then. Now, Diogenes, do you know who it is? has the fellow anything to do with you?

*Diog.* Nothing whatever.

*Par.* Well, what do you put him at? threepence was the price fixed the other day.

*Diog.* Too much. His flavour and his looks are intolerable—a coarse worthless brute. Drop him head first over the rock, and catch another. But take care your rod does not bend to breaking point.

*Par.* No fear; they are quite light—about the weight of a gudgeon.

*Diog.* About the weight and about the wit. However, up with them.

*Par.* Look; what is this one? a sole? flat as a plate, thin 49
as one of his own fillets; he gapes for the hook; down it goes; we have him; up he comes.

*Diog.* What is he?

*Expo.* His plateship would be a Platonist.

*Pl.* You too after the gold, villain?

*Par.* Well, Plato? what shall we do with him?

*Pl.* Off with him from the same rock.

*Diog.* Try again. 50

*Par.* Ah, here is a lovely one coming, as far as one can judge in deep water, all the colours of the rainbow, with gold bars across the back. Do you see, Exposure? this is the sham Aristotle. There he is; no, he has shied. He is having a good look round; here he comes again; his jaws open; caught! haul up.

*Ar.* You need not apply to me; I do not know him.

*Par.* Very well, Aristotle; over he goes.

51 Hullo! I see a whole school of them together, all one colour, and covered with spines and horny scales, as tempting to handle as a hedgehog. We want a net for these; but we have not got one. Well, it will do if we pull up one out of the lot. The boldest of them will no doubt try the hook.

*Expo.* You had better sheathe a good bit of the line before you let it down; else he will gorge the gold and then saw the line through.

*Par.* There it goes. Posidon grant me a quick catch! There now! they are fighting for the bait, a lot of them together nibbling at the figs, and others with their teeth well in the gold. That is right; one soundly hooked. Now let me see, what do *you* call yourself? and yet how absurd to try and make a fish speak; they are dumb. Exposure, tell us who is his master.

*Expo.* Chrysippus.

*Par.* Ah, he must have a master with gold in his name, must he? Chrysippus, tell me seriously, do you know these men? are you responsible for the way they live?

*Ch.* My dear Parrhesiades, I take it ill that you should suggest any connexion between me and such creatures.

*Par.* Quite right, and like you. Over he goes head first like the others; if one tried to eat him, those spines might stick in one's throat.

52 *Philos.* You have fished long enough, Parrhesiades; there are so many of them, one might get away with gold, hook and all, and you have the priestess to pay. Let us go for our usual stroll; and for all you it is time to be getting back to your place, if you are not to outstay your leave. Parrhesiades, you and Exposure can go the rounds now, and crown or brand as I told you.

*Par.* Good, Philosophy. Farewell, ye best of men. Come, Exposure, to our commission. Where shall we go first? the Academy, do you think, or the Porch?

*Expo.* We will begin with the Lyceum.

*Par.* Well, it makes no difference. I know well enough that wherever we go there will be few crowns wanted, and a good deal of branding. H.

## VOYAGE TO THE LOWER WORLD

*Charon. Clotho. Hermes. Shades. Rhadamanthus. Tisiphone. Lamp. Bed*

*Cha.* You see how it is, Clotho; here has all been ship-shape and ready for a start this long time; the hold baled out, the mast stepped, the sail hoisted, every oar in its rowlock; it is no fault of mine that we don't weigh anchor and sail. 'Tis Hermes keeps us; he should have been here long ago. Not a passenger on board, as you may see; and we might have made the trip three times over by this. Evening is coming on now; and never a penny taken all day! I know how it will be: Pluto will think *I* have been wanting to my work. It is not I that am to blame, but our fine gentleman of a supercargo. He is just like any mortal: he has taken a drink of their Lethe up there, and forgotten to come back to us. He'll be wrestling with the lads, or playing on his lyre, or giving his precious gift of the gab a good airing; or he 's off after plunder, the rascal, for what I know: 'tis all in the day's work with him. He is getting too independent: he ought to remember that he belongs to us, one half of him.

*Clo.* Well, well, Charon; perhaps he has been busy: Zeus may 2
have had some particular occasion for his services in the upper world; *he* has the use of him too, remember.

*Cha.* That doesn't say that he should make use of him beyond

what 's reasonable. Hermes is common property. We have never kept him here when he was due to go. No, I know what it is. In these parts of ours all is mist and gloom and darkness, and nothing to be had but asphodel and libations and sacrificial cakes and meats. Yonder in Heaven, all 's bright, with plenty of ambrosia, and no end of nectar. Small wonder that he likes to loiter there. When he leaves us, 'tis on wings; it is as though he escaped from prison. But when the time comes for return, he tramps it on foot, and has much ado to get here at all.

3 *Clo.* Well, never mind now; here he comes, look, and a fine host of passengers with him; a fine flock, rather; he hustles them along with his staff like so many goats. But what 's this? One of them is bound, and another enjoying the joke; and there is one with a wallet slung beside him, and a stick in his hand; a cantankerous-looking fellow; he keeps the rest moving. And just look at Hermes! Bathed in perspiration, and his feet covered with dust! See how he pants; he is quite out of breath. What is the matter, Hermes? Tell us all about it; you seem disturbed.

*Her.* The matter is that this rascal ran away; I had to go after him, and had well nigh played you false for this trip, I can tell you.

*Clo.* Why, who is he? What did he want to run away for?

*Her.* His motive is sufficiently clear: he had a preference for remaining alive. He is some king or tyrant, as I gather from his piteous allusions to blessedness no longer his.

*Clo.* And the fool actually tried to run away, and thought to prolong his life when the thread of Fate was exhausted?

4 *Her.* Tried! He would have got clean away, but for that capital fellow there with the club; he gave me a hand, and we caught and bound him. The whole way along, from the moment that Atropus handed him over to me, he dragged and

hung back, and dug his heels into the ground: it was no easy work getting him along. Every now and then he would take to prayers and entreaties: Would I let him go just for a few minutes? he would make it worth my while. Of course I was not going to do that; it was out of the question.—Well, we had actually got to the very pit's mouth, when somehow or other this double-dyed knave managed to slip off, whilst I was telling over the Shades to Aeacus, as usual, and he checking them by your sister's invoice. The consequence was, we were one short of tally. Aeacus raised his eyebrows. 'Hermes,' he said, 'everything in its right place: no larcenous work here, please. You play enough of those tricks in Heaven. We keep strict accounts here: nothing escapes us. The invoice says 1,004; there it is in black and white. You have brought me one short, unless you say that Atropus was too clever for you.' I coloured up at that; and then all at once I remembered what had happened on the way, and when I looked round and this fellow was nowhere to be seen, I knew that he must have made off, and I set off after him along the road to the upper world, as fast as I could go. My worthy friend here volunteered for the service; so we made a race of it, and caught the runaway just as he got to Taenarum! It was a near thing.

*Clo.* There now, Charon! And we were beginning to accuse Hermes of neglect.

*Cha.* Well, and why are we waiting here, as if there had not been enough delay already?

*Clo.* True. Let them come aboard. I'll to my post by the gangway, with my notebook, and take their names and countries as they come up, and details of their deaths; and you can stow them away as you get them.—Hermes, let us have those babies in first; I shall get nothing out of them.

*Her.* Here, skipper. Three hundred of them, including those that were exposed.

*Cha.* A precious haul, on my word!—These are but green grapes, Hermes.

*Her.* Who next, Clotho? The Unwept?

*Clo.* Ah! I take you.—Yes, up with the old fellows. I have no time to-day for prehistoric research. All over sixty, pass on! What's the matter with them? They don't hear me; they are deaf with age. I think you will have to pick them up, like the babies, and get them along that way.

*Her.* Here they are; fine well-matured fruit, gathered in due season; three hundred and ninety-eight of them.

*Cha.* Nay, nay; these are no better than raisins.

6 *Clo.* Bring up the wounded next, Hermes. *Now* I can get to work. Tell me how you were killed. Or no; I had better look at my notes, and call you over. Eighty-four due to be killed in battle yesterday, in Mysia. These to include Gobares, son of Oxyartes.

*Her.* Adsunt.

*Clo.* The seven who killed themselves for love. Also Theagenes, the philosopher, for love of the Megarian courtesan.

*Her.* Here they are, look.

*Clo.* And the rival claimants to thrones, who slew one another?

*Her.* Here!

*Clo.* And the one murdered by his wife and her paramour?

*Her.* Straight in front of you.

*Clo.* Now the victims of the law,—the cudgelled and the crucified. And where are those sixteen who were killed by robbers?

*Her.* Here; you may know them by their wounds. Am I to bring the women too?

*Clo.* Yes, certainly; and all who were shipwrecked; it is the same kind of death. And those who died of fever, bring them
7 too, the doctor Agathocles and all. Then there was a Cynic philosopher, who was to have succumbed to a dinner with

Dame Hecate, eked out with sacrificial eggs and a raw cuttle-fish; where is he?

*Cy.* Here I stand this long time, my good Clotho. —Now what had I done to deserve such a weary spell of life? You gave me pretty nearly a spindleful of it. I often tried to cut the thread and away; but somehow it never would give.

*Clo.* I left you as a censor and physician of human frailties: pass on, and good luck to you.

*Cy.* No, by Zeus! First let us see our captive safe on board. Your judgement might be perverted by his entreaties.

*Clo.* Let me see; who is he? 8

*Her.* Megapenthes, son of Lacydes; tyrant.

*Clo.* Come up, Megapenthes.

*Me.* Nay, nay, my lady Clotho; suffer me to return for a little while, and I will come of my own accord, without waiting to be summoned.

*Clo.* What do you want to go for?

*Me.* I crave permission to complete my palace: I left the building half-finished.

*Clo.* Pooh! Come along.

*Me.* Oh Fate, I ask no long reprieve. Vouchsafe me this one day, that I may inform my wife where my great treasure lies buried.

*Clo.* Impossible. 'Tis Fate's decree.

*Me.* And all that money is to be thrown away?

*Clo.* Not thrown away. Be under no uneasiness. Your cousin Megacles will take charge of it.

*Me.* Oh, monstrous! My enemy, whom from sheer good-nature I omitted to put to death?

*Clo.* The same. He will survive you for rather more than forty years; in the full enjoyment of your harem, your wardrobe, and your treasure.

*Me.* It is too bad of you, Clotho, to hand over my property to my worst enemy.

*Clo.* My dear sir, it was Cydimachus's property first, surely? You only succeeded to it by murdering him, and butchering his children before his eyes.

*Me.* Yes, but it was mine after that.

*Clo.* Well, and now your term of possession expires.

9 *Me.* A word in your ear, madam; no one else must hear this.—Sirs, withdraw for a space.—Clotho, if you will let me escape, I pledge myself to give you a quarter of a million sterling this very day.

*Clo.* Ha, ha! So your millions are still running in your head?

*Me.* Shall I throw in the two mixing-bowls that I got by the murder of Cleocritus? They weigh a couple of tons apiece; refined gold!

*Clo.* Drag him up. We shall never get him to come on board by himself.

*Me.* I call you all to witness! My city-wall, my docks, remain unfinished. I only wanted five days more to complete them.

*Clo.* Never mind. It will be another's work now.

*Me.* Stay! One request I can make with a clear conscience.

*Clo.* Well?

*Me.* Suffer me only to complete the conquest of Persia; . . . and to impose tribute on Lydia; . . . and erect a colossal monument to myself, . . . and inscribe thereon the military achievements of my life. Then let me die.

*Clo.* Creature, this is no single day's reprieve: you would want something like twenty years.

10 *Me.* Oh, but I am quite prepared to give security for my expeditious return. Nay, I could provide a substitute, if preferred;—my well-beloved!

*Clo.* Wretch! How often have you prayed that he might survive you!

*Me.* That was a long time ago. Now,—I see a better use for him.

*Clo.* But he is due to be here, shortly, let me tell you. He is to be put to death by the new sovereign.

*Me.* Well, Clotho, I hope you will not refuse my last request. 11

*Clo.* Which is?

*Me.* I should like to know how things will be, now that I am gone.

*Clo.* Certainly; you shall have that mortification. Your wife will pass into the hands of Midas, your slave; he has been her gallant for some time past.

*Me.* A curse on him! 'Twas at her request that I gave him his freedom.

*Clo.* Your daughter will take her place in the harem of the present monarch. Then all the old statues and portraits which the city set up in your honour will be overturned,—to the entertainment, no doubt, of the spectators.

*Me.* And will no friend resent these doings?

*Clo.* Who was your friend? Who had any reason to be? Need I explain that the cringing courtiers who lauded your every word and deed were actuated either by hope or by fear —time-servers every man of them, with a keen eye to the main chance?

*Me.* And these are they whose feasts rang with my name! who, as they poured their libations, invoked every blessing on my head! Not one but would have died before me, could he have had his will; nay, they swore by no other name.

*Clo.* Yes; and you dined with one of them yesterday, and it cost you your life. It was that last cup you drank that brought you here.

*Me.* Ah, I noticed a bitter taste.—But what was his object?

*Clo.* Oh, you want to know too much. It is high time you came on board.

12 *Me.* Clotho, I had a particular reason for desiring one more glimpse of daylight. I have a burning grievance!

*Clo.* And what is that? Something of vast importance, I make no doubt.

*Me.* It is about my slave Carion. The moment he knew of my death, he came up to the room where I lay; it was late in the evening; he had plenty of time in front of him, for not a soul was watching by me; he brought with him my concubine Glycerium (an old affair, this, I suspect), closed the door, and proceeded to take his pleasure with her, as if no third person had been in the room! Having satisfied the demands of passion, he turned his attention to me. 'You little villain,' he cried, 'many's the flogging I've had from you, for no fault of mine!' And as he spoke he plucked out my hair and smote me on the face. 'Away with you,' he cried finally, spitting on me, 'away to the place of the damned!'—and so withdrew. I burned with resentment: but there I lay stark and cold, and could do nothing. That baggage Glycerium, too, hearing footsteps approaching, moistened her eyes and pretended she had been weeping for me; and withdrew sobbing, and repeating my name.—If I could but get hold of them——

13 *Clo.* Never mind what you would do to them, but come on board. The hour is at hand when you must appear before the tribunal.

*Me.* And who will presume to give his vote against a tyrant?

*Clo.* Against a tyrant, who indeed? Against a Shade, Rhadamanthus will take that liberty. He is strictly impartial, as you will presently observe, in adapting his sentences to the requirements of individual cases. And now, no more delay.

*Me.* Dread Fate, let me be some common man,—some

pauper! I have been a king,—let me be a slave! Only let me live!

*Clo.* Where is the one with the stick? Hermes, you and he must drag him up feet foremost. He will never come up by himself.

*Her.* Come along, my runagate. Here you are, skipper. And I say, keep an eye——

*Cha.* Never fear. We'll lash him to the mast.

*Me.* Look you, I must have the seat of honour.

*Clo.* And why exactly?

*Me.* Can you ask? Was I not a tyrant, with a guard of ten thousand men?

*Cy.* Oh, dullard! And you complain of Carion's pulling your hair! Wait till you get a taste of this stick; you shall know what it is to be a tyrant.

*Me.* What, shall a Cynic dare to raise his staff against me? Sirrah, have you forgotten the other day, when I had all but nailed you to the cross, for letting that sharp censorious tongue of yours wag too freely?

*Cynic.* Well, and now it is your turn to be nailed,—to the mast.

*Mi.* And what of me, mistress? Am I to be left out of the 14
reckoning? Because I am poor, must I be the last to come aboard?

*Clo.* Who are you?

*Mi.* Micyllus the cobbler.

*Clo.* A cobbler, and cannot wait your turn? Look at the tyrant: see what bribes he offers us, only for a short reprieve. It is very strange that delay is not to your fancy too.

*Mi.* It is this way, my lady Fate. I find but cold comfort in that promise of the Cyclops: 'Outis shall be eaten last,' said he; but first or last, the same teeth are waiting. And then, it is not the same with me as with the rich. Our lives are what they call 'diametrically opposed.' This tyrant, now, was

thought happy while he lived; he was feared and respected by all: he had his gold and his silver; his fine clothes and his horses and his banquets; his smart pages and his handsome ladies,—and had to leave them all. No wonder if he was vexed, and felt the tug of parting. For I know not how it is, but these things are like birdlime: a man's soul sticks to them, and will not easily come away; they have grown to be a part of him. Nay, 'tis as if men were bound in some chain that nothing can break; and when by sheer force they *are* dragged away, they cry out and beg for mercy. They are bold enough for aught else, but show them this same road to Hades, and they prove to be but cowards. They turn about, and must ever be looking back at what they have left behind them, far off though it be,—like men that are sick for love. So it was with the fool yonder: as we came along, he was for running away; and now he tires you with his entreaties. As for me, I had no stake in life; lands and horses, money and goods, fame, statues,—I had none of them; I could not have been in better trim: it needed but one nod from Atropus,—I was busied about a boot at the time, but down I flung knife and leather with a will, jumped up, and never waited to get my shoes, or wash the blacking from my hands, but joined the procession there and then, ay, and headed it, looking ever forward; I had left nothing behind me that called for a backward glance. And, on my word, things begin to look well already. Equal rights for all, and no man better than his neighbour; that is hugely to my liking. And from what I can learn there is no collecting of debts in this country, and no taxes; better still, no shivering in winter, no sickness, no hard knocks from one's betters. All is peace. The tables are turned: the laugh is with us poor men; it is the rich that make moan, and are ill at ease.

*Clo.* To be sure, I noticed that you were laughing, some time ago. What was it in particular that excited your mirth?

*Mi.* I'll tell you, best of Goddesses. Being next door to a tyrant up there, I was all eyes for what went on in his house; and he seemed to me neither more nor less than a God. I saw the embroidered purple, the host of courtiers, the gold, the jewelled goblets, the couches with their feet of silver: and I thought, this is happiness. As for the sweet savour that arose when his dinner was getting ready, it was too much for me; such blessedness seemed more than human. And then his proud looks and stately walk and high carriage, striking admiration into all beholders! It seemed almost as if he must be handsomer than other men, and a good eighteen inches taller. But when he was dead, he made a queer figure, with all his finery gone; though I laughed more at myself than at him: there had I been worshipping mere scum on no better authority than the smell of roast meat, and reckoning happiness by the blood of Lacedaemonian sea-snails! There was Gniphon the 17
usurer, too, bitterly reproaching himself for having died without ever knowing the taste of wealth, leaving all his money to his nearest relation and heir-at-law, the spendthrift Rhodochares, when he might have had the enjoyment of it himself. When I saw him, I laughed as if I should never stop: to think of him as he used to be, pale, wizened, with a face full of care, his fingers the only rich part of him, for they had the talents to count,—scraping the money together bit by bit, and all to be squandered in no time by that favourite of Fortune, Rhodochares!—But what are we waiting for now? There will be time enough on the voyage to enjoy their woebegone faces, and have our laugh out.

*Clo.* Come on board, and then the ferryman can haul up the anchor.

*Cha.* Now, now! What are you doing here? The boat 18
is full. You wait till to-morrow. We can bring you across in the morning.

*Mi.* What right have you to leave me behind,—a shade of twenty-four hours' standing? I tell you what it is, I shall have you up before Rhadamanthus. A plague on it, she's moving! And here I shall be left all by myself. Stay, though: why not swim across in their wake? No matter if I get tired; a dead man will scarcely be drowned. Not to mention that I have not a penny to pay my fare.

*Clo.* Micyllus! Stop! You must not come across that way; Heaven forbid!

*Mi.* Ha, ha! I shall get there first, and I shouldn't wonder.

*Clo.* This will never do. We must get to him, and pick him up.... Hermes, give him a hand up.

19 *Cha.* And where is he to sit now he is here? We are full up, as you may see.

*Her.* What do you say to the tyrant's shoulders?

*Clo.* A good idea that.

*Cha.* Up with you then; and make the rascal's back ache. And now, good luck to our voyage!

*Cy.* Charon, I may as well tell you the plain truth at once. The penny for my fare is not forthcoming; I have nothing but my wallet, look, and this stick. But if you want a hand at baling, here I am; or I could take an oar; only give me a good stout one, and you shall have no fault to find with me.

*Cha.* To it, then; and I'll ask no other payment of you.

*Cy.* Shall I tip them a stave?

*Cha.* To be sure, if you have a sea-song about you.

*Cy.* I have several. Look here though, an opposition is starting: a song of lamentation. It will throw me out.

20 *Sh.* Oh, my lands, my lands!—Ah, my money, my money!—Farewell, my fine palace!—The thousands that fellow will have to squander!—Ah, my helpless children!—To think of the vines I planted last year! Who, ah who, will pluck the grapes?——

*Her.* Why, Micyllus, have *you* never an Oh or an Ah? It is

quite improper that any shade should cross the stream, and make no moan.

*Mi.* Get along with you. What have I to do with Ohs and Ahs? I'm enjoying the trip!

*Her.* Still, just a groan or two. It's expected.

*Mi.* Well, if I must, here goes.—Farewell, leather, farewell! Ah, Soles, old Soles!—Oh, ancient Boots!—Woe's me! Never again shall I sit empty from morn till night; never again walk up and down, of a winter's day, naked, unshod, with chattering teeth! My knife, my awl, will be another's: whose, ah! whose?

*Her.* Yes, that will do. We are nearly there.

*Cha.* Wait a bit! Fares first, please. Your fare, Micyllus; every one else has paid; one penny.

*Mi.* You don't expect to get a penny out of the poor cobbler? You're joking, Charon; or else this is what they call a 'castle in the air.' I know not whether your penny is square or round.

*Cha.* A fine paying trip this, I must say! However,—all ashore! I must fetch the horses, cows, dogs, and other live-stock. Their turn comes now.

*Clo.* You can take charge of them for the rest of the way, Hermes. I am crossing again to see after the Chinamen, Indopatres and Heramithres. They have been fighting about boundaries, and have killed one another by this time.

*Her.* Come, shades, let us get on;—follow me, I mean, in single file.

*Mi.* Bless me, how dark it is! Where is handsome Megillus *now*? There would be no telling Simmiche from Phryne. All complexions are alike here, no question of beauty, greater or less. Why, the cloak I thought so shabby before passes muster here as well as royal purple; the darkness hides both alike. Cyniscus, whereabouts are you?

*Cy.* Use your ears; here I am. We might walk together. What do you say?

*Mi.* Very good; give me your hand.—I suppose you have been admitted to the mysteries at Eleusis? That must have been something like this, I should think?

*Cy.* Pretty much. Look, here comes a torch-bearer; a grim, forbidding dame. A Fury, perhaps?

*Mi.* She looks like it, certainly.

23 *Her.* Here they are, Tisiphone. One thousand and four.

*Ti.* It is time we had them. Rhadamanthus has been waiting.

*Rhad.* Bring them up, Tisiphone. Hermes, you call out their names as they are wanted.

*Cy.* Rhadamanthus, as you love your father Zeus, have me up first for examination.

*Rhad.* Why?

*Cy.* There is a certain shade whose misdeeds on earth I am anxious to denounce. And if my evidence is to be worth anything, you must first be satisfied of my own character and conduct.

*Rhad.* Who are you?

*Cy.* Cyniscus, your worship; a student of philosophy.

*Rhad.* Come up for judgement; I will take you first. Hermes, summon the accusers.

24 *Her.* If any one has an accusation to bring against Cyniscus here present, let him come forward.

*Cy.* No one stirs!

*Rhad.* Ah, but that is not enough, my friend. Off with your clothes; I must have a look at your brands.

*Cy.* Brands? Where will you find them?

*Rhad.* Never yet did mortal man sin, but he carried about the secret record thereof, branded on his soul.

*Cy.* Well, here I am stripped. Now for the 'brands.'

*Rhad.* Clean from head to heel, except three or four very faint marks, scarcely to be made out. Ah! what does this mean? Here is place after place that tells of the iron; all

rubbed out apparently, or *cut* out. How do you explain this, Cyniscus ? How did you get such a clean skin again ?

*Cy.* Why, in old days, when I knew no better, I lived an evil life, and acquired thereby a number of brands. But from the day that I began to practise philosophy, little by little I washed out all the scars from my soul,—thanks to the efficiency of that admirable lotion.

*Rhad.* Off with you then to the Isles of the Blest, and the excellent company you will find there. But we must have your impeachment of the tyrant before you go.—Next shade, Hermes !

*Mi.* Mine is a very small affair, too, Rhadamanthus ; I shall 25
not keep you long. I have been stripped all this time ; so do take me next.

*Rhad.* And who may you be ?

*Mi.* Micyllus the cobbler.

*Rhad.* Very well, Micyllus. As clean as clean could be ; not a mark anywhere. You may join Cyniscus. Now the Tyrant.

*Her.* Megapenthes, son of Lacydes, wanted ! Where are you off to ? This way ! You there, the Tyrant ! Up with him, Tisiphone, neck and crop.

*Rhad.* Now, Cyniscus, your accusation and your proofs. Here is the party.

*Cy.* There is in fact no need of an accusation. You will very 26
soon know the man by the marks upon him. My words however may serve to unveil him, and to show his character in a clearer light. With the conduct of this monster as a private citizen, I need not detain you. Surrounded with a bodyguard, and aided by unscrupulous accomplices, he rose against his native city, and established a lawless rule. The persons put to death by him without trial are to be counted by thousands, and it was the confiscation of their property that gave him his enormous wealth. Since then, there is no conceivable iniquity

which he has not perpetrated. His hapless fellow-citizens have been subjected to every form of cruelty and insult. Virgins have been seduced, boys corrupted, the feelings of his subjects outraged in every possible way. His overweening pride, his insolent bearing towards all who had to do with him, were such as no doom of yours can adequately requite. A man might with more security have fixed his gaze upon the blazing sun, than upon yonder tyrant. As for the refined cruelty of his punishments, it baffles description; and not even his familiars were exempt. That this accusation has not been brought without sufficient grounds, you may easily satisfy yourself, by summoning the murderer's victims.—Nay, they need no summons; see, they are here; they press round as though they would stifle him. Every man there, Rhadamanthus, fell a prey to his iniquitous designs. Some had attracted his attention by the beauty of their wives; others by their resentment at the forcible abduction of their children; others by their wealth; others again by their understanding, their moderation, and their unvarying disapproval of his conduct.

27 *Rhad.* Villain, what have you to say to this?

*Me.* I committed the murders referred to. As for the rest, the adulteries and corruptions and seductions, it is all a pack of lies.

*Cy.* I can bring witnesses to these points too, Rhadamanthus.

*Rhad.* Witnesses, eh?

*Cy.* Hermes, kindly summon his Lamp and Bed. They will appear in evidence, and state what they know of his conduct.

*Her.* Lamp and Bed of Megapenthes, come into court. Good, they respond to the summons.

*Rhad.* Now, tell us all you know about Megapenthes. Bed, you speak first.

*Bed.* All that Cyniscus said is true. But really, Mr. Rhadamanthus, I don't quite like to speak about it; such strange things used to happen overhead.

*Rhad.* Why, your unwillingness to speak is the most telling evidence of all!—Lamp, now let us have yours.

*Lamp.* What went on in the daytime I never saw, not being there. As for his doings at night, the less said the better. I saw some very queer things, though, monstrous queer. Many is the time I have stopped taking oil on purpose, and tried to go out. But then he used to bring me close up. It was enough to give any lamp a bad character.

*Rhad.* Enough of verbal evidence. Now, just divest yourself of that purple, and we will see what you have in the way of brands. Goodness gracious, the man's a positive network! Black and blue with them! Now, what punishment can we give him? A bath in Pyriphlegethon? The tender mercies of Cerberus, perhaps?

*Cy.* No, no. Allow me,—I have a novel idea; something that will just suit him.

*Rhad.* Yes? I shall be obliged to you for a suggestion.

*Cy.* I fancy it is usual for departed spirits to take a draught of the water of Lethe?

*Rhad.* Just so.

*Cy.* Let him be the sole exception.

*Rhad.* What is the idea in that?

*Cy.* His earthly pomp and power for ever in his mind; his fingers ever busy on the tale of blissful items;—'tis a heavy sentence!

*Rhad.* True. Be this the tyrant's doom. Place him in fetters at Tantalus's side,—never to forget the things of earth.

F.

# ALPHABETICAL CONTENTS

(Roman numerals indicate the volume, and Arabic the page.)

In this table all the titles are given in the English list. The other lists are added for those to whom the Greek or Latin names are familiar; but they do not contain the titles that are practically identical with the English ones.

## ENGLISH TITLES


Alexander ii 212
Anacharsis iii 190
Apology ii 27
Book-fancier iii 265
Charon i 167
Cock iii 105
Cynic iv 172
Defence iii 24
Demonax iii 1
Demosthenes iv 145
Dependent Scholar ii 1
Dialogues of the Dead, i 107
Dialogues of the Gods i 62
Dialogues of the Hetaerae iv 52
Dialogues of the Sea-Gods i 90
Dionysus iii 252
Dipsas iv 26
Disinherited ii 183
Double Indictment iii 144
Fisher i 206
Fly iii 261
Gods in Council iv 165
Hall iv 12
Harmonides ii 99
Heracles iii 256
Hermotimus ii 41
Herodotus ii 90
Hesiod iv 30
Icaromenippus iii 126
Lapithae iv 127
Lexiphanes ii 263
Liar iii 230
Literary Prometheus i 7
Lower World i 230
Menippus i 156
Mourning iii 212
Nigrinus i 11
Pantomime ii 238
Parasite iii 167
Patriotism iv 23
Peregrine iv 79
Phalaris ii 201
Portrait-study iii 13
Prometheus i 53
Purist iv 181
Rhetorician iii 218
Runaways iv 95
Sacrifice i 183
Sale of Creeds i 190
Saturnalia iv 108
Scythian ii 102
Ship iv 33
Slander iv 1
Slip of Tongue ii 34
Swans iii 259
Timon i 31
Toxaris iii 36
True History ii 136
Tyrannicide ii 173
Vision i 1
Vowels i 26
Way to write ii 109
Zeus cross-examined iii 71
Zeus Tragoedus iii 80
Zeuxis ii 94


## LATIN TITLES NOT READILY TO BE FOUND IN THE ENGLISH LIST


Abdicatus ii 183
Adversus indoctum iii 265
Bis accusatus iii 144
Calumniae non temere credendum iv 1
Cataplus i 230
De domo iv 12
De electro iii 259
De luctu iii 212
De mercede conductis ii 1
Deorum concilium iv 165

De sacrificiis i 183
De saltatione ii 238
Dialogi deorum i 62
Dialogi marini i 90
Dialogi meretricii iv 52
Dialogi mortuorum i 107
Fugitivi iv 95
Imagines iii 13
Iudicium vocalium i 26
Iupiter confutatus iii 71
Iupiter tragoedus iii 80
Muscae encomium iii 261
Navigium iv 33
Patriae encomium iv 23
Philopseudes iii 230
Piscator i 206
Pro imaginibus iii 24
Pro lapsu inter salutandum ii 34
Prometheus es in verbis i 7
Pseudosophista iv 181
Quomodo historia conscribenda sit ii 109
Rhetorum praeceptor iii 218
Somnium (Gallus) iii 105
Somnium (Vita Luciani) i 1
Symposium iv 127
Vera historia ii 136
Vitarum auctio i 190

## GREEK TITLES NOT READILY TO BE FOUND IN THE ENGLISH LIST

Ἀληθὴς ἱστορία ii 136
Ἁλιεύς i 206
Ἀποκηρυττόμενος ii 183
Βίων πρᾶσις i 190
Δίκη φωνηέντων i 26
Δὶς κατηγορούμενος iii 144
Δραπέται iv 95
Εἰκόνες iii 13
Ἐνάλιοι διάλογοι i 90
Ἑταιρικοὶ διάλογοι iv 52
Ζεὺς ἐλεγχόμενος iii 71
Θεῶν διάλογοι i 62
Θεῶν ἐκκλησία iv 165
Κατάπλους i 230
Μυίας ἐγκώμιον iii 261
Νεκρικοὶ διάλογοι i 107
Ὄνειρος iii 105
Πατρίδος ἐγκώμιον iv 23
Περὶ θυσιῶν i 183
Περὶ ὀρχήσεως ii 238
Περὶ πένθους iii 212
Περὶ τοῦ ἐνυπνίου i 1
Περὶ τοῦ ἠλέκτρου iii 259
Περὶ τοῦ μὴ ῥᾳδίως πιστεύειν διαβολῇ iv 1
Περὶ τοῦ οἴκου iv 12
Περὶ τῶν ἐπὶ μισθῷ συνόντων ii 1
Πλοῖον iv 33
Πρὸς τὸν ἀπαίδευτον καὶ πολλὰ βιβλία ὠνούμενον iii 265
Πρὸς τὸν εἰπόντα Προμηθεὺς εἶ ἐν λόγοις i 7
Πῶς δεῖ ἱστορίαν συγγράφειν ii 109
Ῥητόρων διδάσκαλος iii 218
Συμπόσιον iv 127
Τὰ πρὸς Κρόνον iv 108
Τυραννοκτόνος ii 173
Ὑπὲρ τῶν εἰκόνων iii 24
Φιλοψευδὴς iii 230
Ψευδοσοφιστής iv 181

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